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## **Federation to New Nationhood**

### **The Development of Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1950-64**

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*Awarding institution:*  
King's College London

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# Federation to New Nationhood

*The Development of Nationalism in Northern  
Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1950-64*

Robert William Leonard Power  
*DPhil History*

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Robert Power

November 2012

## *Synopsis*

This thesis aims to contribute to our understanding of the development and significance of anti-colonial nationalism within Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland between 1953 and 1964. Reappraising the work of David Mulford and Robert Rotberg, the thesis will focus upon the means by which Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party and Hastings Banda's Malawi Congress Party came to dominate the national agenda in the 1950s and 60s. Emphasis will be placed upon the extent to which African politicians successfully mobilised the African people against the Federation, translating complex political arguments and winning support for their own, exclusive, national ideal.

Galvanised by the imposition of the Central African Federation, the political elite embarked upon an ambitious programme to politically educate the African masses. The initial objective was to win African advancement within the Federal context in the hope that this might eventually translate into African majority government. When such changes were not forthcoming, and when the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian governments embarked upon a campaign to suppress African political parties in 1959, nationalist objectives subsequently changed. As the British appeared blind to African politicisation, political leaders turned away from



Britain as the supposed 'protector' of African interests and instead came to call for African self-government in an independent Zambia and Malawi. In so doing they drew upon the support of powerful pan-African, and international, allies who encouraged MCP and UNIP politicians to accept nothing less than their desired goal of independence and helped to place pressure upon the British government to resolve an increasingly untenable situation in Central Africa.

The thesis will contribute to the historiography in two principal ways. In the first instance, the thesis will seek to contemporise accounts of the rise of nationalism that emerged in the immediate post-independence period, proposing that the rise of UNIP and the MCP was not always as inevitable as such accounts would imply. Rather, it depended upon the initiative, foresight, and abilities of African politicians in winning the confidence and support of the African masses. It depended also, after 1959, upon the ability of nationalist leaders to forge links between party and nation and, crucially, upon an expanding network of pan-African and international anticolonial allies. It is here that the thesis will hope to make an original contribution to the prevailing historiography by demonstrating that the development of nationalism did not solely occur within an exclusively Zambian-Malawian context. The success of mobilisation campaigns, and indeed the independence struggle, rested heavily upon the support of external allies who proved vital in both pressuring the British and lending moral and financial support to African politicians. By such means, it is hoped that the thesis will go some way to emphasising the importance of extending the study of Zambian and Malawian independence beyond the traditional metropolitan-peripheral axis.

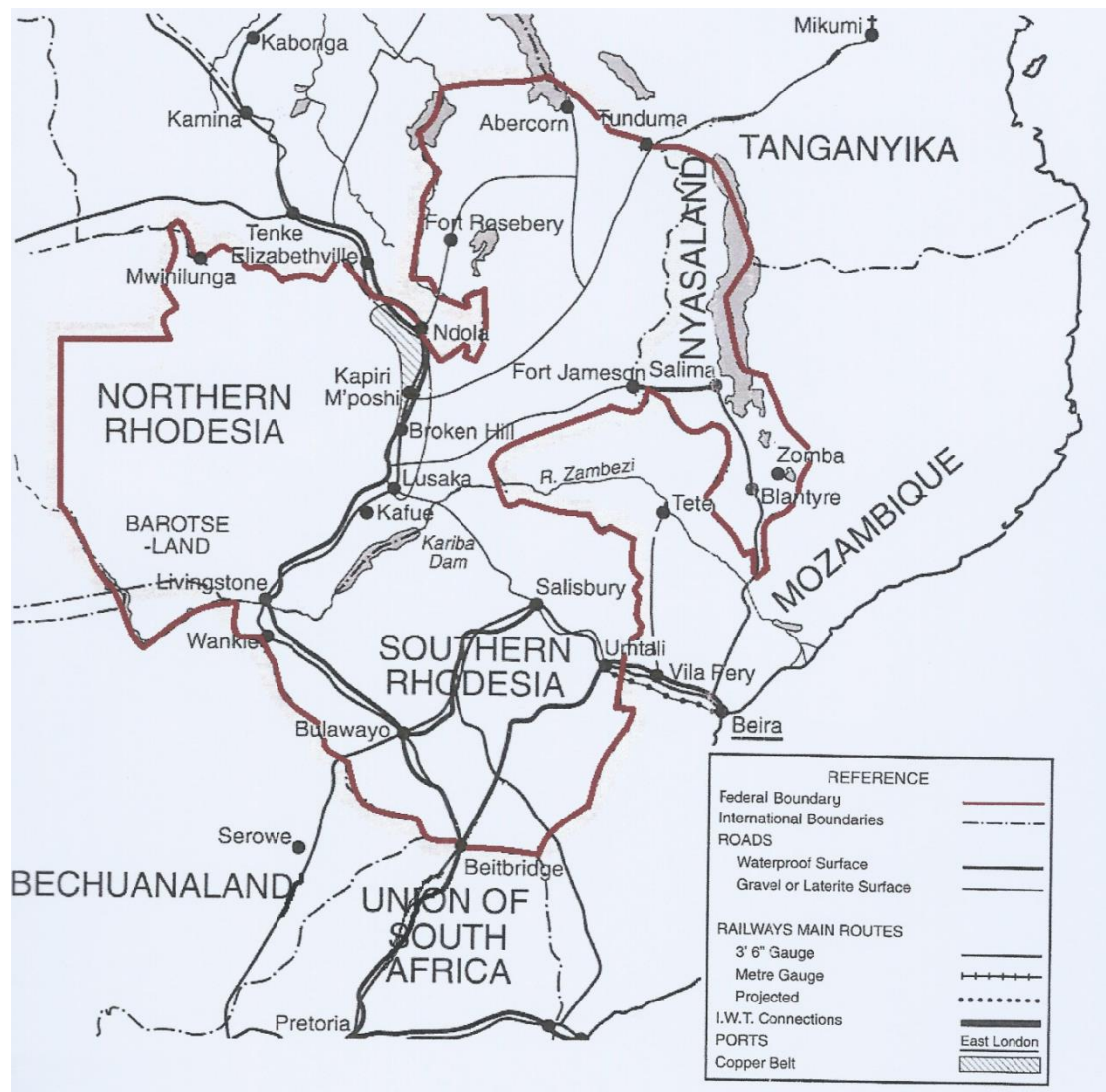
## *List of Abbreviations*

ACOA	American Committee on Africa
AB	Africa Bureau
ANC	African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia
ANIP	African National Independence Party (Northern Rhodesia)
AMWU	African Mine Workers Union, Northern Rhodesia
BL	British Library, London
CAB	Cabinet Office
CAF	Central African Federation
CO	Colonial Office
COA	Committee of Africa Organisations
COPAI	Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism
CCAP	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
CPP	Convention Peoples Party (Ghana)
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
DO	Dominions Office
FAWSNR	Federation of African Welfare Societies of Northern Rhodesia
FCB	Fabian Colonial Bureau
FISB	Federal Intelligence and Security Bureau
IFS	Improvement Farmers' Scheme (Northern Rhodesia)
LMW	League of Malawi Women (Women's branch of the MCP)
LMY	League of Malawi Youth (Youth wing of the MCP)
MCF	Movement for Colonial Freedom
MCP	Malawi Congress Party

MFS	Master Farmers Scheme (Nyasaland)
NA	National Archives, Kew
NAC	Nyasaland African Congress
NANU	Nyasaland African National Union
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
PAFMECSA	Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central and Southern Africa
RH	Rhodes House Library, Oxford
RST	Rhodesian Selection Trust
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TBC	Tanganyika Broadcasting Company
UCAA	United Central Africa Association
UFP	United Federal Party
UN	United Nations
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UNFP	United National Freedom Party (Northern Rhodesia)
US	United States
ZANC	Zambia African National Congress

# Maps

*Map of the Central African Federation*



## Map of Modern-day Zambia



*Map of Modern-day Malawi*



## *Introduction*

The Central African Federation (1953-1964) was one of the most ambitious imperial experiments ever undertaken by the British government. It joined together the white, self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, effectively placing over six million Africans under the governmental authority of just over two-hundred-thousand European settlers.<sup>1</sup> Justifying plans for Federation, the Conservative government promised greater opportunities for African socio-economic and political advancement that would, it was hoped, establish a precedent for the development of multi-racial 'partnership' between Africans and Europeans. The scheme, they argued, would go some way to fulfilling Britain's long-term declared aim of 'guiding' Africans towards self-government, at the same time ameliorating chronic difficulties inherent in the Central African polity arising from the co-existence of two competing racial groups.

When the Federation came into being on 1 August 1953, it was greeted with a chorus of African opposition in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland that was not to abate. Not only did Africans object to the proposals, which they alleged established the basis for the spread of discriminatory Southern Rhodesian native legislation

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this thesis 'Northern Rhodesia' will be used refer to colonial Zambia and 'Nyasaland' to refer to colonial Malawi.

northwards, but the imposition of the scheme, in spite of African objections, alienated Africans from the outset. By the late-1950s, African antipathy had reached an unprecedented scale. The series of riots that broke out in Nyasaland in 1959, accompanied by the scaling up of anti-Federation protest in Northern Rhodesia, not only revealed that Federation was unlikely to gain African acceptance, but that frustrations over the failure to achieve immediate constitutional concessions was beginning to manifest in widespread revolt against the colonial state. By mid-1962, the British government recognised that the situation was beyond redemption and by the end of the year both Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia had African majority governments. Once the Federation had been officially dissolved in December 1963, the path was subsequently cleared for independence, achieved by Nyasaland (henceforth called Malawi) on 6 July 1964 and by Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) three months later, on 24 October. Federal idealism had crumbled on the rocks of African nationalism.

By 1964 African politicians had succeeded in winning independence from Federation, an altogether remarkable achievement given that genuine African nationalist sentiment was considered 'non-existent' by Federal and British authorities in 1953.<sup>2</sup> There is an extensive literature on the development of nationalism in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia that focuses precisely on how, and why, nationalists were able to achieve new nationhood in such a relatively short period. But despite this large and expanding historiography, there remain aspects of the development of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland respectively that still warrant greater attention. What factors brought Kenneth

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<sup>2</sup> Mulford, D., *Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964* (Oxford, 1967). Rotberg, R., *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, 1965).



Kaunda's United National Independence Party [UNIP] and Hastings Banda's Malawi Congress Party [MCP] to power in 1964? How did nationalist sentiment—that is, a collective adherence among vast swathes of the indigenous people to a shared vision of African socio-economic advancement and eventual self-government—come to be so widespread, and why was it that UNIP and the MCP came to dominate the political agenda in their respective territories? Assuming a trans-national approach, the intention of this thesis is to answer some of these fundamental questions in order to account for the rise and development of African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, identifying the ways and means by which a small cohort of politically-minded Africans were able to politicise the African masses, mobilising them against Federation and later winning support for *their* vision of a new Zambian and Malawian nation. Part of the reason lay in the ability of UNIP and MCP activists to construct a *vision* of all-African unity which came to be performed through mass rallies, protests, stories, ceremonies and symbols. The thesis shall refer to these issues in greater depth in chapters one, two, four and five.

This thesis intends to focus exclusively upon Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, rather than Southern Rhodesia, largely because both territories followed a similar political trajectory, achieving independence in 1964. Unlike Southern Rhodesia, which fell under the remit of the Commonwealth Relations Office, the northern Federal territories were under the joint supervision of the Colonial Office. Subsequently, they possessed similar internal political dynamics and, as such, developments in either territory almost certainly exercised a significant effect on the other. Although the progress of Africans in Northern

Rhodesia and Nyasaland undoubtedly impacted upon Southern Rhodesia, its political trajectory was quite distinct. Having been effectively self-governing since 1923, the fate of Africans lay predominantly with its powerful European settler cohort. As such, African nationalist sentiment has been seen historiographically as developing much later, the issue of Southern Rhodesia's independence rising to the fore *after* the end of the Central African Federation.<sup>3</sup>

### *Historiography*

As will be discussed in chapter one, literature written from the British perspective about nationalism in Central Africa is primarily concerned with the origins of the Federation and the shift in British policy away from the Federation in the early 1960s rather than the development of nationalism.<sup>4</sup> Literature written by those concerned primarily with the African perspective, however, is far more extensive. As illustrated by Robert Rotberg's *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, and David Mulford's hugely influential study, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964*, historical accounts of the immediate post-independence period tended to mirror the trajectory of nationalist politics on the spot. The triumph of UNIP and the MCP was seen as inevitable from the outset, their victory a natural consequence of the opposition posed to the Federation before its imposition upon

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<sup>3</sup> To concur with Terence Ranger, the foremost scholar on Southern Rhodesian nationalism, it is crucial to note that the foundations for mass African nationalism in the territory took root long before the end of the Federation. UNIP and MCP branches, for instance, played a leading role in stimulating nationalist protest elsewhere. See for instance Ranger, T.O., *Are We Not Also Men? The Samkange Family and African Politics in Zimbabwe, 1920-1964*, (London, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> The most comprehensive account to date is Philip Murphy's contribution to the *British Documents on the End of Empire Series*. See Murphy, P., 'Central Africa: Part I: Closer Association 1945-1958' *British Documents on the End of Empire Series* (London, 2005), see 'introduction', pp.i-iii.

Africans.<sup>5</sup> The result is that for many years very little was said to question the UNIP and MCP narrative, that their dominance of nationalist politics was not only justified but very popular. But whilst both studies went some way towards accounting for the rise of UNIP and the MCP, the internal dynamics and struggles encountered by nationalist politicians in their attempts to politicise the masses was assigned marginal significance. Moreover, little consideration was given to the role played by political activists outside the African educated elite.<sup>6</sup>

Historians writing in the 1970s attempted to redress this imbalance. In 'Nationalist Historians in Search of a Nation', Denoon and Kuper implored scholars to take a broader approach to African history. Nationalism was not just a political phenomenon; the character of independence movements emerging in the 1950s was shaped by socio-economic developments at the local, territorial and metropolitan levels and, as such, the issue ought to be approached from the viewpoint of 'ordinary' Africans rather than the vantage point of the politically conscious elite.<sup>7</sup> Others responded to the challenge tracing African political development within economic and social institutions. In Zambia's case, historians such as J. Meynaud, A. Salah-Bey, Thomas Rasmussen and Elena Berger began to emphasise the importance of the trade union movement as a breeding for the stimulation of national consciousness.<sup>8</sup> In the case of Malawi, emphasis was placed

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<sup>5</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*; Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*.

<sup>6</sup> These trends were later apparent in Fagan, B.M. (ed.). *A Short History of Zambia from the Earliest Times until A.D.1900*. (London, 1968), Van Velson, J., 'Some Early Pressure Groups in Malawi', in Stokes, E., Brown, R., (eds.) *Studies in Central African History* (Manchester, 1966) pp. 376-412, both of which emphasised the role of the educated elite in stimulating nationalist politics.

<sup>7</sup> Denoon, D., Adam Kuper, A., 'Nationalist Historians in Search of a Nation: The 'New Historiography' in Dar es Salaam', *African Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 277 (Oct., 1970), pp. 329-349.

<sup>8</sup> The former argued that the roots of mass nationalism lay predominantly in trade union militancy, expressed predominantly in the labour strikes of the 1930s. Elena Berger disagreed, suggesting that the trade union movement was generally apolitical, Meynaud, J., Salah-Bey, A., *Trade Unionism in*

on the role of religious separatism and missions. Studies such as those by Ian Linden and John McCracken, which emphasised the centrality of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian missions at Blantyre and Livingstone in politicising Africans, were typical of the ideas circulating at this time.<sup>9</sup>

Running concurrent to, and influencing, these trends was the rise of anthropological scholarship, carried out under the aegis of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.<sup>10</sup> As the work of Peter Harries-Jones, J.F. Holleman and S. Biesheuvel, and notably A.L. Epstein indicates, many scholars observed that socio-economic change at the local-level exercised a profound and lasting impact upon African development.<sup>11</sup> As such, their studies focussed predominantly upon the ways in which 'national' politics were played out at the local level, providing a unique perspective on the role played by local party activists who interpreted, and thus shaped, the 'national' vision translated to them by the political elites.<sup>12</sup> These rich insights gleaned from the study of elite mobilisation strategies at grass roots demonstrated, above all, that the study of nationalism 'from below' was equally as

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*Africa* (London, 1967) see also Rasmussen, Thomas. 'The Popular Basis of Anti-Colonial Protest'. In Tordoff, W., (ed.) *Politics in Zambia*, (Manchester, 1974), pp. 40-6. Berger, E.L., *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule: The Copperbelt from 1924 to Independence* (Oxford, 1974).

<sup>9</sup> McCracken, J., *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940. The impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province*. (Cambridge, 1977). See also McCracken, J., 'Underdevelopment in Malawi: the missionary contribution'. *African Affairs*, 76:303 (1977), 195-209. Linden, I., *Catholics, Peasants and Chewa Resistance in Nyasaland, 1889-1939* (Berkley, 1974). Some of these concepts were initially raised in the publication of the first major collection of works to emerge on Malawi, see MacDonald, R.J., (ed) *From Nyasaland to Malawi: Studies in Colonial History*, (Nairobi, 1975).

<sup>10</sup> Founded in 1938, the Rhodes Livingstone Institute was the first local anthropological research facility in Africa. Designed to allow for easier study of the local cultures of Northern Rhodesia, it became the base of operations for a number of leading anthropologists of the time.

<sup>11</sup> See Harries-Jones, P., *Freedom and Labour: Mobilization and Political Control on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Oxford, 1975), Holleman, J.F., Biesheuvel, S., *White mine workers in Northern Rhodesia 1959-1960* (Leiden, 1973), Epstein, A.L., *Politics in an African urban community* (Manchester, 1958), and Hortense Powdermaker's earlier study, *Copper Town: Changing Africa, The Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* (New York, 1962).

<sup>12</sup> Gewald, J-B., Hinfelaar, M., Macola, G., (eds.) *Living the End of Empire, Politics and Society in Late Colonial Zambia*, (Leiden, 2011), 'Introduction', p.5.

valuable as the 'high political' focus of studies produced hitherto.<sup>13</sup> Arguably the most influential study to emerge was Andrew Roberts' *History of Zambia*. Published in 1976, Roberts not only rejected the single-minded emphasis on African resistance taken by his contemporaries, but attempted to show that the study of 'the nation' stretched far beyond the period of colonial rule and the boundaries imposed by British politicians and administrators that had been advocated in previous works focussing solely on the period 1953-64.

Significant development in nationalist historiography remained relatively static until the early 1990s.<sup>14</sup> Whilst taking into consideration the role of the elite, academics recognised the need to draw together the 'high political' and 'local' arguments produced in earlier decades. Studies such as Owen Kalinga's 'Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi' made a compelling case for incorporating the studies of anthropologists into the historical narrative in order to better appreciate the role played by peasants and the urban working classes in the fight against colonialism.<sup>15</sup> Kalinga argued that given the ample evidence of increasing anti-colonial unrest in rural communities and also the different forms of hidden struggles in the workplace, there was need to re-examine the relationship between Nyasaland's African political leaders on the one hand and that of the peasants and

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<sup>13</sup> The intention here has not been to analyse in great depth the contributions of the Rhodes Livingstone Institute to our understanding of Zambia and Malawi's history. Richard Werbner provides a more detailed account in Werbner, R.P., 'The Manchester School in South-Central Africa', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1984, 13, pp.157-85.

<sup>14</sup> This is not to suggest, of course, that scholars writing in the 1980s had little to contribute to the discussion. See for instance Ranger, T.O., *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* (London, 1985), pp.1-17, and Vaughan, M., 'Famine Analysis and Family Relations: 1949 in Nyasaland', *Past and Present*, 108 (1985), both of which sought to refocus attention on the periphery rather than the metropole.

<sup>15</sup> Kalinga, O.J.M., 'Résistance, Politics of Protest, and Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi, 1950-1960. A Reconsideration', *Cahiers d'études africaines*. Vol. 36 No., 143, (1996), pp. 443-454.

workers whom they claimed to represent on the other.<sup>16</sup> That such a revision was possible owed much to the liberalisation of the political climate in Malawi and Zambia by the end of one-party rule in each country in 1994 and 1991 respectively. New witnesses came forward to dispute the authority of the MCP and UNIP whilst those once part of the one-party state, who had for many years enforced its dominance through suppression of dissenting voices, now became less inclined to perpetuate one-party supremacy.

In the new political climate, the most significant studies to emerge on Malawi in this period were produced by John McCracken, whose work played an important role in illuminating the local dynamics to the building of Malawian nationalism.<sup>17</sup> McCracken's most important contribution was his seminal article 'Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: The Case of Malawi'.<sup>18</sup> Accounting for the growth of authoritarianism in Malawian nationalism, McCracken traced its roots to the nature of nationalist organisation developing during the 1950s which emphasised Hastings Banda's indispensability in the national struggle. McCracken's work rejuvenated the study of African nationalism. In an attempt to find the hidden voices of the Malawian independence struggle that had been suppressed by the Banda-centred narrative that had hitherto dominated the

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<sup>16</sup> An example of such a study may be seen, for instance in Charles Ambler's work on local protest and the beerhall boycotts in Northern Rhodesia in the late 1950s. Ambler, C., 'Alcohol, Racial Segregation and Popular Politics in Northern Rhodesia', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1990), pp. 295-313.

<sup>17</sup> See for instance, McCracken, J., 'Blantyre Transformed: Class, Conflict and Nationalism in Urban Malawi', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (1998), pp. 247-269. McCracken's exploration of the local dynamics of Malawian nationalism were later revised in McCracken, J., 'Conservation and resistance in Colonial Malawi: the 'Dead North' Revisited', in McCracken, J., Lovering, T.J., Johnson Chalamanda, F., (eds.) *Twentieth Century Malawi: perspectives on history and culture* (Centre of Commonwealth Studies, University of Stirling, Occasional Paper Number 7, Sept., 2001), in which McCracken advocated the importance of the rural north.

<sup>18</sup> McCracken, J., 'Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: The Case of Malawi', *African Affairs*, Vol. 97, No. 387 (Apr., 1998), pp. 231-249.

historiography, new studies refocused attention on previously marginalised individuals. These developments were encapsulated in Joey Power's *Building Kwacha*, the most comprehensive analysis of Malawian nationalism produced to date.<sup>19</sup> Tracing the origins of mass nationalist sentiment to the pre-Banda era and by re-emphasising the role of former disgraced MCP leaders such as Henry Chipembere and Dunduza Chisiza, whose legacy was wiped out by Banda's regime after the 1964 Cabinet Revolt, Joey Power's work has done much to enrich the study of the Malawian independence struggle. Based upon diligent archival and oral research, having conducted hundreds of interviews with contemporaries over a ten-year period, Power helped shed light on the manner in which political violence was used to popularise and sustain the MCP's hold over the African polity. This thesis hopes to extend Power's ideas.

It was not until the publication of the edited volumes of *One Zambia, Many Histories* in 2008, closely followed by Giacomo Macola's *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa* in 2010 that the historiography of nationalism in Zambia was to undergo similar major revision.<sup>20</sup> By focussing on the continual presence of UNIP's main rival, Harry Nkumbula's African National Congress [ANC], in the Zambian polity, Macola provided an invaluable corrective to the earlier UNIP-centred narrative of political change that tended to belittle counter-hegemonic political and ethnic projects in Northern Rhodesia during the independence struggle.<sup>21</sup> Macola thus helped to illuminate the contradictions and internal struggles inherent in the

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<sup>19</sup> Power J., *Political Culture and Nationalism in Malawi: Building Kwacha* (New York, 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Gewald, J.B., Hinfelaar, M., Macola, G., (eds.), *One Zambia, Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-colonial Zambia* (Leiden, 2008), Macola, G., *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa: A Biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula* (Basingstoke, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

Zambian nationalist movement that shaped the trajectory of Zambian politics long after independence. His approach cast new light on local, regional, and international historiographies which in turn precipitated a major revision of UNIP's rise to national prominence. In a similar manner to recent Malawian scholarship, this new literature also explored the role of violence and intimidation as an important tactic in the nationalist mobilisation programme. By showing the extent to which violence and intimidation was deployed by nationalist leaders against their political rivals, UNIP's nationalism no longer appeared to be the all-conquering, dominating, liberating force that historians writing in the immediate post-independence period seemed to suggest. These ideas found expression in the follow-up to *One Zambia, Living the End of Empire: Politics and Society in Late Colonial Zambia*, published in 2011.<sup>22</sup>

These new studies have done much to reignite debate on the independence struggle in colonial Zambia and Malawi, but a number of fundamental questions still remain unanswered. How, for instance, did nationalist politicians *mobilise* Africans? What methods were deployed to win the hearts and minds of the people in the 1950s and 1960s and in what ways, if any, did this alter the trajectory of nationalist politics as nationalist parties attempted to respond to constitutional developments? Moreover, how did nationalism evolve and why were certain parties and individuals able to triumph at the expense of others?

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<sup>22</sup> Gewald, J.B., Hinfelaar, M., Macola, G., (eds.) *Living the End of Empire, Politics and Society in Late Colonial Zambia*, (Leiden, 2011).



## *The Development of Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1953-64*

The intention of this thesis is to answer some of these fundamental questions in order to account for the development of African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the rise of UNIP and the MCP between 1953 and 1964. Where the thesis will make an original contribution to the historiography is by shedding light on the examination of tactics used by African political leaders to mobilise the African people. Exploring the ways in which the two African National Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland emerged from relative obscurity to become fully fledged political parties by the mid-1950s, the thesis will explain how national identity developed, how this ideal was translated to the people and why so many Africans freely devoted themselves to it. An intrinsic part of making relevant the struggle against Federation was the ability of Congress leaders to make political capital from local protests. By capitalising upon unrest caused, for instance, by discrimination against Africans in butcheries, where non-whites were forced to buy sub-standard meat from hatches at the back of shops, leaders from the Northern Rhodesian ANC were able to closely tie together African disaffection at the local level with the much wider issue of African rights within Federation. Popular politics at this stage were rooted in the locality, participation often being dependent upon existing 'local' discontent. This interpretation is not of course novel, especially in South-East Asian historiography. Writing about the Indian experience, for example, historians such as Christopher Baker and D.A. Washbrook, have suggested that

national politics were forged in the localities by political leaders who used local unrest as a means of building momentum behind their 'national' campaign.<sup>23</sup>

In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, mobilisation in the localities played an essential role in laying the foundations for mass nationalism. But at this juncture popular participation was too prone to socio-economic and regional differentiation for a genuine movement encompassing all Africans to emerge. The declaration of a state of emergency in Nyasaland and the implementation of political restrictions in Northern Rhodesia in early 1959 marked somewhat of a turning point in this regard, a time in which Africans were brought together in unity against the state. Thereafter, leaders of the newly formed MCP and UNIP scaled up their attempts to adopt a truly 'national' approach to African politicisation something, Africans leaders felt, would help facilitate a faster transition to independence. Using various propaganda and organisational techniques, party activists worked hard to build a national programme which transcended local, socio-economic, and ethnic divisions. This process was, however, fraught with complications. In seeking to claim for themselves inheritance of the new political dispensation, both UNIP and the MCP embarked upon a dangerous trajectory, one which resulted in the entrenchment of authoritarianism in the burgeoning Zambian and Malawian polity. The result was the vindication of intolerance, not only for open political opposition, but for independent expressions of civil society which represented a threat to the fragile bindings of the nation-state.

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<sup>23</sup> Washbrook, D.A., Baker, C.J., *South India: political institutions and political change, 1880-1940* (London, 1975). For a discussion on the 'Cambridge School', see Wilson, J., 'Agency, Narrative, and Resistance', in Stockwell, S., (ed.) *The British Empire, Themes and Perspectives* (Oxford, 2008) p.253.

The thesis will not only seek to identify *why* violence emerged, but *how* it was used by nationalist politicians as an important tool for political mobilisation. It became a key means for enforcing party loyalty, a way in which people could actively contribute to the independence struggle. To intimidate a political rival was akin to participating in a ritual, visual, display of party loyalty. Violent tendencies became especially prominent once it was clear that the anti-Federation struggle had been won in 1962. As Jan Pettman later reflected in 1974, 'what little national unity and mobilisation had been achieved in the struggle declined with the removal of the common enemy'.<sup>24</sup> The response of UNIP and MCP leaders was to find a new common enemy, something they felt would unite the people at a critical moment before independence.

For the MCP, groups or individuals questioning Banda's dominance in the party became the focus of agitation. For UNIP, the continued presence of the ANC in the Northern Rhodesian polity resulted in the scaling up of the campaign to eradicate the party from the political scene. Party propagandists rallied against ANC 'traitors' and party members were warned to remain vigilant against the ANC threat. In the short-term, this policy did much to suppress internal differences and maintain party unity. UNIP and the MCP each subsequently made a relatively trouble-free transition to parties of government in an independent Zambia and Malawi. The long-term effects, however, were to cast a lingering shadow over the futures of both nations. In their desperation to secure secession from the Federation both the UNIP and the MCP sacrificed long-term African unity. The seeds for division were always present in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but

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<sup>24</sup> Pettman, J., 'Zambia's Second Republic — the Establishment of a One-Party State', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1974), pp. 831-44.

after 1959 the popularisation of the party-nation conflation intensified socio-economic and ethno-regional differences. Those groups 'opting out' of UNIP and the MCP, or those seeking to interpret party policy in a manner different to that envisioned by party leaders, were regarded as a clear and present danger to the party and, as such, the future of the nation. By populating this monolithic version of nationalism, UNIP and the MCP might have succeeded in achieving their immediate objectives, but in so doing they undermined the very basis on which politicians in the early 1950s had built the anti-Federation struggle: African unity.

Where this thesis also hopes to make a modest contribution to the historiography is by placing nationalist development within a much broader, international context. In so doing, the thesis will show that the development of mass nationalism was not a process confined to the borders of Central Africa. The process was indeed influenced, moulded, and shaped by external forces keen to liberate Africa from colonial rule. The thesis thus hopes to go some way to bridging the gap between African, Imperial and international historiographies by shedding light on African connections with British and international constituencies during the 1950s and 1960s. The interaction and exchange of information between these two constituencies not only helped mould the independence struggle 'on the spot', but it also influenced the trajectory of international anti-colonialism. The thesis will therefore argue that exploration of African engagement with external agencies is central to understanding why international anti-colonialism developed in the early 1960s and why, for instance, the United States and the United Nations helped to accelerate British decolonisation in Central Africa by pressuring the British to

resolve the racial dilemma in the Federation in favour of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland's African people.

As Miles Larmer suggests, it was by no means inevitable that UNIP, or indeed the MCP, would become the parties of government in post-colonial Zambia and Malawi.<sup>25</sup> UNIP in particular was an uneasy coalition of competing elements, vying with the ANC for domestic supremacy. What proved critical for both parties was the support given by sympathetic governments and anti-colonial bodies, which helped facilitate their rise to the fore of national politics. Between 1953 and 1958, the ANC and the NAC depended heavily upon the financial and moral support of anti-colonialists in Britain to both improve their domestic prospects and to consolidate their position as *the* representatives of African political opinion in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Drawing parallels with Nicholas Owen's work on British anti-imperialism and Indian nationalism, it will be suggested that the close and personal contacts forged between African politicians in the Federation and prominent members of the British anti-colonial movement played an essential role in raising the profile of the anti-Federation struggle domestically, winning for the ANC and NAC status as political parties of consequence with whom the British government would have to negotiate.<sup>26</sup> These connections became increasingly important in 1959, when the campaign fought on behalf of Africans in Britain proved to be vitally important in keeping alive anti-Federation sentiment in British politics.

Stephen Howe explored British anti-colonial connections with nationalists in

*Anti-colonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire 1918-1964*,

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<sup>25</sup> Larmer, M., *Rethinking African Politics: A History of Opposition in Zambia*, (Farnham, 2011), p.12.

<sup>26</sup> Owen, N., *The British Left and India: Metropolitan Anti-Imperialism, 1885-1947*, (Oxford, 2007).

published in 1993.<sup>27</sup> Since then, only Owen has attempted to explore the particular and ever-changing pattern of relations between metropolitan anti-colonial organisations and the colonial people they claimed to represent. Even then, his study is concerned predominantly with India and, as such, very little has been said of anti-colonial relations with African independence movements. This thesis hopes to contribute to this neglected field of historical study by tracing the rise and fall of nationalist relations with British anti-colonialists, how the anti-colonial message was received in Central Africa and, crucially, why after 1959 Africans began to doubt the capacity of their metropolitan allies to act decisively in their interests.

After this time, African politicians began to broaden their horizons, expanding their network of collaborators by virtue of an ambitious campaign to bring the Federation's problems to the fore of the international political agenda. For the MCP, the 1959 emergency had yielded tangible benefits. The exposure given to Nyasaland's problems throughout the world had given Hastings Banda a critical advantage in pressing his claims for his release from detention, the ending of emergency regulations and negotiations over African constitutional advancement. For UNIP, the changes that followed Banda's release in Nyasaland left an indelible imprint on the minds of party leaders; if Northern Rhodesia was to experience similar change, the African struggle needed to be brought to the attention of the international community. By extending the struggle for independence beyond the borders of the Federation, particularly in UNIP's case, nationalists won crucial support for their cause. They were not only able to frame the anti-Federation struggle in an exclusively UNIP context, thereby giving the party

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<sup>27</sup> Howe, S., *Anti-colonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire 1918-1964* (Oxford, 1993).

a decisive and distinct advantage over its political rival, but they also helped shape the growing international anti-colonial debate.<sup>28</sup> Using UNIP's 'international relations' files, several British and American 'official' sources and the archives of British anti-colonial groups with whom nationalists corresponded, such as the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the Africa Bureau, the thesis will seek to explain the importance of the international context in which the independence struggle in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland took place.<sup>29</sup> It will be argued that as nationalists became more assertive, so they attempted to harness powerful forces not always in their control and turn them to their advantage, profoundly influencing the thinking of the United Nations, and later the United States, towards the Federation. This demonstrated not only great flexibility, but a maturity and awareness of circumstances external to the independence struggle that many historians have neglected to appreciate.

## *Methodology*

This thesis draws upon research in innumerable British-based and African sources. It makes extensive use of archives pertaining to major British anti-colonial organisations, including the Africa Bureau and the Fabian Colonial Bureau, held at Rhodes House Library, Oxford, and the records of the Movement for Colonial

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<sup>28</sup> As the recent work of Andrew DeRoche, which investigates UNIP's engagement with the United States Government in the early 1960s, has demonstrated, such studies allow the historian to appreciate that nationalism was formed by its interaction with external collaborators. See DeRoche, A., 'Dreams and Disappointments: Kenneth Kaunda and the United States, 1960–64', *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, 9:4 (2008), pp.369-394.

<sup>29</sup> This issue was initially raised in Andrew Roberts' criticism of Peter Duignan and L.H. Gann's *The United States and Africa* (New York, 1984). The principal problem, Roberts wrote, that whilst the book claimed to analyse African relations with America, it was written from an ostensibly American perspective, with little heed devoted to the ways in which African interaction impacted upon US thinking towards the continent. See Roberts, A., Review Article: 'Americans and Africa', *The Journal of African History* (1987), 28, pp 295-299.

Freedom and Thomas Fox-Pitt, Director of the Anti-Slavery Society, held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. To supplement these sources, and to analyse in greater depth the interaction between anti-colonialists, the Labour Party Archive, held at the People's History Museum, Manchester, has been of great use. To further explore the 'British' perspective, extensive research on official government records pertaining to the Federation has been conducted in the British National Archives, Kew. In order to glean a greater understanding of the attitudes prevailing in the Conservative government between 1951 and 1964 towards Federation, the Conservative Party Archive held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford also proved extremely useful.

Given the predominantly African focus of this thesis, the author has been extremely sensitive to potential criticism that might arise from the use of predominantly British sources. In an attempt to bridge the gap between 'Imperial' and 'Africanist' approaches, much has been done to engage with, and utilise, a wealth of material originating from Malawi and Zambia, both written and oral. Extensive use has been made, for instance, of the archives of the United National Independence Party, which contain also the records of the African National Congress Party of Northern Rhodesia, digital copies of which are held at the British Library, London, as part of the Endangered Archives Project initiative. During a trip to Malawi and Zambia in the summer of 2011, some research was conducted on the swathe of material available to view at the National Archives of Malawi, Zomba. Perhaps the most interesting evidence used to form ideas contained within this thesis, however, was obtained from interviews conducted with former political activists and the children of former political activists in Zomba and Lusaka. The



selection of interview candidates was largely conditioned by whether certain individuals, or in some cases their close relatives, had experienced or participated in the movement to achieve Zambian and Malawian independence in the 1950s and 1960s. All interviewees were asked the same questions pertaining to their contribution to the struggle and scope was permitted, where appropriate, to follow-up responses with unscripted queries. Of course, not all evidence gathered in interviews necessarily reflected a true representation of events as they transpired. Indeed, the accounts given were expressions of personal opinions and, as such, needed to be subjected to the same scrutiny as would be applied to examination of other primary and secondary sources, and used in conjunction with them. A notable feature of interviews conducted with former UNIP members or activists, for instance, was the tendency to downplay or dismiss entirely the role played by the ANC, the party's political rival. Whilst these interviews were utilised to help inform the author's views pertaining to the nature of the political climate in Northern Rhodesia during the 1950s, they were by no means treated as fact. The views and opinions expressed in all interviews were in many respects widely divergent; some individuals spoke in redemptive terms about their role as former MCP or UNIP members, others nostalgic, but each conversation reflected a deep reverence for the achievement of their forebears in winning the independence struggle. Above all, they helped broaden the horizons of this author, providing a unique, insightful, and eminently valuable perspective into African political life.

## *Chapter Synopsis*

The development of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland can be divided into two very distinct phases. The thesis will therefore be divided into two parts: part one will examine the period 1953-1958 and part two will focus upon 1959-1964. The years 1953-1958 were, for the Congresses, formative years, a period in which nationalist leaders took the first tentative steps to mobilise on a truly 'national' scale. Chapter one will examine the context of the anti-Federation struggle and establish the importance of the debate leading up to the inauguration of the Central African Federation in 1953 as a stimulus to African political activity. Emphasis will be placed upon African objections to the scheme, and the manner in which these objections were translated to the African masses at grass roots. It will also be suggested that the process of African political mobilisation rather ironically served to undermine Congress efforts to prevent the imposition of the Federation. Lacking a coherent political programme and struggling to coordinate party activities, the anti-Federation campaign did little to alter the prevailing assumption in British government circles that African protest was not only ill-conceived, but predisposed towards radicalism. Given the already problematic strain of settler nationalism existent in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, the Congress-led anti-Federation protest strengthened Britain's resolve that Federation would work to the benefit of all Central Africa's inhabitants, providing opportunities for greater political and economic development whilst at the same time directing burgeoning African nationalism into moderate channels.

Extending some of the themes in chapter one, chapter two will examine the effects that Britain's actions exerted upon the African community in 1953.

Galvanised by the decision to impose Federation upon Africans, this chapter will identify the ways and means by which ANC and NAC leaders attempted to translate an essentially 'high-political' concept to the largely illiterate African masses. Building upon recent theses by Power and Macola, it will be suggested that, by seizing upon momentum generated by local grievances, the Congresses played a pivotal role in establishing 'nationalism' in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Attempts will be made, in addition, to explain how 'localised' nationalist protests were able to connect with the centre, and more fundamentally, *how* such 'local' grievances were given 'national' relevance by nationalist leaders.

Chapter three will focus upon the ways in which British anti-colonialists sought to advance the cause of the Congresses in Britain and in Central Africa. Whilst their initial remit was to raise the profile of the anti-Federation struggle in Britain, anti-colonialist groups such as the Africa Bureau, the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the British Labour Party began to play an important role in the organisation of mass nationalist politics in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland too. By lending advice on political organisation to Congress leaders, and by operating on behalf of Africans in the metropole, anti-colonialists served to legitimise the anti-Federation struggle. Crucially, although they were generally unable to alter British government policy in the Federation, anti-colonial activities were vital in providing the link between African nationalists and the West, steering the Congresses away from potential 'extremist' influences.

The years 1959-1964 were arguably the most eventful in the history of Zambia and Malawi. It was during these years that the anti-Federation struggle evolved into a fight for independence, a time in which mass nationalism truly took

root in Central Africa. Chapters four and five will seek to explore in great depth the evolution of nationalist politics in these years. Chapter four will focus on Nyasaland's transition to independence, chapter five will place emphasis upon Northern Rhodesia. Why did UNIP and the MCP emerge and how were nationalist leaders able to cultivate among Africans a genuine commitment to the achievement of a greater nation having struggled to do so between 1953 and 1958? Emphasis will be given to the ways in which nationalists struggled to overcome internal difficulties and the profound effects that this exerted upon the national agenda.

Chapter six will have a dual purpose. Initially, the chapter will focus upon the role of British anti-colonialists during 1959, emphasising their centrality to the emergence of mass nationalism thereafter. By campaigning upon behalf of former Nyasaland and Zambia Congress members, anti-colonialists helped sustain momentum behind the nationalist struggle at a critical juncture. The second purpose of the chapter will be to account for the profound and lasting impact that British anti-colonial activities exerted upon the MCP and UNIP national programmes. Whilst anti-colonialists arguably succeeded in creating a wider consciousness of the situation materialising in the Federation, they failed to gain for Africans significant constitutional concessions. For the MCP, the 1959 emergency yielded tangible results. Following the release of Hastings Banda in April 1960, the British government appeared to be set on a course that would lead to African majority government in Nyasaland. For UNIP, the situation stood in stark contrast. Ever more desperate for change, UNIP leaders began to look beyond their anti-colonial allies in Britain, sending UNIP representatives abroad with the hope of raising awareness of the African plight in Northern Rhodesia.

By virtue of the changing international circumstances, UNIP found a receptive audience, particularly in America. This impacted upon the situation in several ways. In the first instance, the British government came under increasing pressure to resolve the situation in favour of indigenous Africans. Perhaps most importantly, however, UNIP's attempts to expand the party's network of collaborators decisively altered the trajectory of nationalist politics. UNIP became *the* preferred interlocutors of the international community, serving not only to legitimise its claims to represent all Africans in Northern Rhodesia, but consolidate its hold over the national dispensation then materialising.

The intention of this thesis is not to fundamentally reorient the ways in which the historian understands nationalism. By shedding valuable light on the ways in which African nationalism took root in Zambia and Malawi, and by seeking to trace nationalist mobilisation strategies and their impact at grass roots level, this thesis will establish a basis for further study of the origins of African nationalism. Moreover, by extending the study beyond the Federation's borders, the thesis will provide a case for studying nationalist development within a much wider remit. In this context, the originality of the thesis will lie, not only in its attempts to bridge the African-Imperial historiographical gap, but also in its attempts to connect with broader studies on international anti-colonialism, endeavouring to explain the development of anti-colonial and nationalist ideals by tracing the links between Central Africa's nationalist leaders and prominent international leaders, governments and organisations. This study will begin, however, with an analysis of the origins of the Central African Federation, the issue which irrevocably damaged

the African relationship with their British colonial 'protectors', sowing the seeds from which mass African nationalism was to emerge.

# 1

## *The Origins of African Politicisation: Britain, Settlers and African Opposition to the Central African Federation 1945-1953*

Exploring Africa in 1955, American author John Gunther tried to explain why the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland came into existence.<sup>1</sup> He identified four reasons; that it would ensure the continuation of British influence in southern Africa, that it would make for a more prosperous Central Africa economy, that it would ameliorate racial tension by accommodating settler and African constitutional ambitions, and that it would, if successful, provide a pattern for the evolution of racial partnership in other parts of Africa.<sup>2</sup> Developments in the subsequent historiography closely mirrored Gunther's initial observations. Early studies of the region by scholars such as Colin Leys and Philip Mason, both of whom were highly critical of Britain's policy in Africa in the 1950s, attempted to explain the Federation's origins by focusing exclusively upon the role of white settlers in pressurising, first, the post-war Labour Government and then the Conservative

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<sup>1</sup> John Gunther was perhaps most famous for his "Inside" series of continental surveys. In order to research extensively his subject matter, Gunther travelled throughout the region his book was intended to cover, interviewing political, social, and business leaders, conversing with average people and reviewing area statistics. He then endeavoured to produce a lengthy overview of what he had learned and how he interpreted it.

<sup>2</sup> Gunther, J., *Inside Africa* (New York, 1955), p.51

Government, which came into office in 1951, into creating a constitutional arrangement that appeared to hand settlers sole governmental authority in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland.<sup>3</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, scholars instead came to emphasise Britain's fear of the spread of South African racial policies northwards. The Federation, Prosser Gifford argued, was effectively an attempt to create a bloc of British territory capable of countering the threat posed by South Africa's National Government, elected in 1948 with a strong apartheid programme, whose discriminatory racial policies might soon spread beyond the confines of the Union raising the potential for conflict between white and black throughout the entire Continent.<sup>4</sup>

In 1987, Ronald Hyam extended Gifford's thesis. In what is considered to be the first study of significance incorporating British archival material pertaining to the period, Hyam suggested that Federation was a 'geopolitical' initiative designed to win the support of Central Africa's settlers who, it was felt, were becoming ever more inclined to turn towards the Union to support their goals for closer association.<sup>5</sup> South Africa's influence thus had to be 'contained' by consolidating a pro-British power-bloc in Central Africa. Although Federation was to all intents a compromise for all interest groups involved, it was nevertheless regarded as essential for preservation of continued British influence over the future of an important part of the African empire. Developing Hyam's argument, Philip Murphy

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<sup>3</sup> Leys, C., *European Politics in Southern Rhodesia* (Oxford, 1959), p.13, Mason, P., *The Birth of a Dilemma: The Conquest and Settlement of Rhodesia* (London, 1958), p.23. Objections to white supremacy caused numerous scholars to incorporate the 'forgotten factor' of African nationalism into contemporary accounts.

<sup>4</sup> Gifford, P., 'Misconceived Dominion: The Creation and Disintegration of Federation in British Central Africa' in Gifford, P., Roger Louis, W., (eds.), *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization 1940-1960* (London, 1982) pp. 387-416.

<sup>5</sup> Hyam, R., 'The Geopolitical Origins of the Central African Federation: Britain, Rhodesia and South Africa, 1948-1953', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 30, No.1. (Mar., 1987), pp.145-172.



argued that growing settler nationalism played a key role in forcing officials in the Colonial and Commonwealth offices to take a proactive approach to reconciling settlers' amalgamation goals with Britain's own objectives for southern Africa. By exacerbating the threat posed by increased Afrikaner immigration into Central Africa, settlers in favour of amalgamation actively played upon British fears concerning the spread of South African apartheid northwards. Faced with the prospect of losing control in Central Africa, fast becoming an economic and strategic asset in the post-war years, British moves towards Federation gathered pace in the early 1950s. It was a constitutional measure that would not only moderate perceived anti-British settler nationalism, but might also establish the basis for multiracial partnership between settlers and the African majority.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the political advantages, the Federation might also promise certain economic and strategic benefits. This was acknowledged by Larry Butler, who argued that the creation of a larger Central African state reflected its value to Britain as a high dollar-earner at a time in which Britain was enduring persistent balance of payments crises. The Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt was especially important, not only providing valuable minerals for post-war reconstruction and Korean War rearmament, but by assisting the US in meeting a short fall of copper and cobalt during its strategic stockpiling programme also served as a key link in Anglo-American relations. Officials hoped that federation would facilitate regional planning, overcoming persistent fuel and transport problems and encourage much

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<sup>6</sup> Murphy, P., "Government by Blackmail": The Origins of the Central African Federation Reconsidered' in Lynn, M., (ed.) *The British Empire in the 1950s, Retreat or Revival?* (Basingstoke, 2006) pp. 53-76.

needed investment that had hitherto inhibited the expansion of the Copperbelt.<sup>7</sup> Recently, Andrew Cohen has disputed Butler's claims. It was not the economic value of Central Africa to Britain that helped convince the British that federation would be beneficial, he argued. Rather, it was connections forged between influential businessmen with interests on the Copperbelt, such as Harold Hochschild, and leading settler politicians, who formed a powerful lobby in Central Africa in favour of closer association, which subsequently came to place increasing pressure upon the British to resolve the situation decisively in settlers' favour.<sup>8</sup>

A consistent theme running throughout the historiography to date, then, is the contention that federation was a British response to concerns over burgeoning settler nationalism, a force which posed a clear and present danger to continued British control in Central Africa. What remained fairly marginalised in the historiography was the role played by African nationalism. This chapter will not argue for a major reappraisal of the factors leading to the creation of the Federation in 1953; it will, however, argue that burgeoning African nationalism, or more specifically British concerns over the trajectory of African political development, ought to occupy a more central role within the current debate. By exploring African opposition to closer association, and by examining the ways in which African politicians in the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress [ANC] and the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC] attempted to mobilise vast numbers of Africans against the controversial proposals, it will be suggested that the British government saw in federation an attempt to moderate what was

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<sup>7</sup> Butler, L., *Copper Empire: Mining and the Colonial State in Northern Rhodesia, C. 1930-64* (London, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Cohen, A., 'Business and Decolonisation in Central Africa Reconsidered', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36:4 (2008) pp. 641-658.

regarded as a potentially dangerous strain of African nationalism. If left unchecked, it was feared, Africans might soon become embroiled in a racial conflict with Central Africa's ever more militant settler politicians. Federation, it was believed, offered a means to channel African and settler nationalism into lines more acceptable to British expectations, consolidating British influence in the region providing socio-economic and political advancement for Africans that would facilitate greater cooperation between white and black in Central Africa. African political development was not, therefore, an issue which precipitated discussions over closer association. When African opposition over such proposals rose to the fore, however, it confirmed the view that steps needed to be taken in order to preserve stability within the region.

As will be shown, British appraisals of the situation were gravely misplaced. In an ironic twist the Federation, once implemented, merely served to fuel existing African grievances, bringing together Africans from widely differing socio-economic backgrounds for the first time against the colonial state. In laying foundations for a measure which appeared at face value to consign Africans to years of subjection to the rule of the settler minority, the seeds were sown from which mass African nationalism was later to germinate.

### *The Historical Context: The Origins of the Central African Federation*

The concept of creating an enlarged Central African state dated back to 1915 when the British South Africa Company, then administering Northern and Southern Rhodesia under Royal Charter, proposed an amalgamation of the territories in

order to promote greater economic coordination.<sup>9</sup> In 1922, the company entered negotiations with the government of the Union of South Africa, which was keen to incorporate Southern Rhodesia—a plan foiled by the colony's settlers, who voted in favour of self-government. In 1923, the British government chose not to renew the Company's charter, and instead accorded 'self-governing' colony status to Southern Rhodesia, under the remit of the Commonwealth Relations Office, and protectorate status to Northern Rhodesia, which became the responsibility of the Colonial Office. It was not until 1930, when Lord Passfield, the Labour Secretary of State for the Colonies, reiterated the doctrine of paramountcy of native interests first articulated in the 'Devonshire Declaration' of 1923 that Rhodesian settlers again began to articulate their aspirations for closer association. Settler anxiety to gain full control over all aspects of government stemmed predominantly from the perpetual insecurity that the British might one day be convinced of the need to hand the African majority self-government. Settler objectives were framed in January 1936 at the first Victoria Falls conference in which it was stated that early amalgamation was 'in the best interests of all the inhabitants of both colonies'.<sup>10</sup> Pressure from settlers forced the British government into action. In 1937, the Bledisloe Commission was appointed to explore the options for closer association between the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. The report of the Commission, which appeared in March 1939, recognised the desirability of closer cooperation between the Central African territories, yet ruled against immediate amalgamation owing to the

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<sup>9</sup> Sommerville, J.J.B., 'The Central African Federation', *International Affairs*, Vol. 39, No. 3. (Jul., 1963), p.387.

<sup>10</sup> Shipway, M., *Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (London, 2008), p.136.

difference in stages of constitutional development between Southern Rhodesia and the northern territories.<sup>11</sup>

The fundamental obstacle to closer association remained the different approach towards native policy in the Rhodesias. Since Southern Rhodesia was self-governing, the territory's white settler government had been given a free hand in managing native affairs. In contrast, Northern Rhodesia's protectorate status ensured that London continued to look after the welfare of Africans. By the early 1950s, there emerged somewhat of a discrepancy between the two, with one contemporary observer noting that Southern Rhodesia's attitude to its African majority increasingly resembled a diluted version of South Africa's apartheid policy.<sup>12</sup> This was a strong opinion, but it nevertheless highlights the obvious differences in the ways in which African rights and, more pertinently, African advancement in the Rhodesias was perceived. In attempting to overcome this barrier the Labour Party's Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech Jones privately advised the leader of the Northern Rhodesian Unofficials in 1947, Roy Welensky, that 'no government' would agree to amalgamation and 'place the control of several million black people in the hands of a few hundred thousand whites'.<sup>13</sup> Concluding that 'nothing could be gained by pressing for amalgamation', Welensky turned his attention to some form of federation 'which would secure all the advantages of a larger economic unit, but which would not prejudice the advancement of the

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<sup>11</sup> Mason, P., 'Partnership in Central Africa', *International Affairs*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Apr., 1957) p.156.

<sup>12</sup> Barnes, J.A., 'History in a Changing Society', *Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Journal*, XI, (1951), pp.1-24, p.16.

<sup>13</sup> Welensky, R., *4000 Days: The Life and Death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1964), p.21.

African population of Northern Rhodesia'.<sup>14</sup> The sign that settler leaders were prepared to embrace a more realistic model of closer association altered the perception of key officials in Britain. The hugely influential Assistant Under-Secretary for African Affairs at the Colonial Office, Andrew Cohen, fastened upon this as a 'very important development', and wondered whether Britain ought not to 'attempt a step forward towards federation in the near future'.<sup>15</sup>

The deadlock remained until 1951, when Labour's new Commonwealth Relations Secretary, Patrick Gordon Walker embarked on a fact-finding mission in Central Africa. Upon his return in March 1952, he produced a hugely influential memorandum in which he confirmed suspicions that European settlers were likely to grow ever closer to South Africa if Britain failed to meet their demands.<sup>16</sup> In response, G.H. Baxter of the Commonwealth Office produced an outline of federal proposals with a view to overcoming lingering concerns pertaining to the dominance of European power and African political development.<sup>17</sup> The 'Baxter Report', which contained proposals for an African Affairs Board to act as a check on legislation, and a Minister for African Interests to check executive action, formed the basis of a joint memorandum produced by the new Conservative Colonial Secretary, Oliver Lyttelton, and the new Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Ismay, which established the precedent for federation soon after the Conservative Party's General Election victory in October 1951.<sup>18</sup> Although federation fell short of the

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<sup>14</sup> N[ational] A[rchives] of the United Kingdom, Kew, C[olonial] O[ffice] 537/3608, no.4, Record of a meeting with Northern Rhodesian Representatives, 30 July 1948.

<sup>15</sup> NA, CO 537/7203, no.7, 'Notes on Central African closer association proposals': memorandum by AB Cohen, 18 April 1951, in which Cohen echoed his earlier stance.

<sup>16</sup> NA, CAB[inet] Office 129/45/ CP(51)109, memo by Gordon Walker, 16 April 1951.

<sup>17</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa: Part I: Closer Association 1945-1958', p.xlv.

<sup>18</sup> NA, CAB 129/48 C(51)11, joint Cabinet memorandum by Lord Ismay and Lyttelton, 9 November 1951.

settler desire for amalgamation between the Rhodesias, it was seen by British officials as a useful compromise. It not only partially fulfilled settler demands, staving off further pressure for closer association, but it also held the potential for creating a genuine multiracial state in an important strategic location by providing Africans with opportunities for advancement under the supervision of the Colonial and Commonwealth Offices. It was thus imperative that white settler opinion, particularly in Southern Rhodesia, was mobilised behind the scheme. Objections voiced against the scheme by the African community was to be expected, remarked Edgar Parry of the Colonial Office, but given the likelihood that African would refuse to countenance any constitutional measure tying together the Rhodesias anyway it ought not to pose an 'insuperable problem' to Britain's aims.<sup>19</sup>

After protracted discussions with settler politicians including Welensky and Huggins, officials in the Colonial Office, responsible for Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and the Commonwealth Relations Office, responsible for the government of Southern Rhodesia, drew up a draft federal scheme at the Lancaster House Conference in April 1952. Under these proposals, legislative powers were divided between the federal and territorial governments. Those services that covered the day-to-day life of the Africans remained under the control of the Colonial governments in each territory while the Federal Government was given a very wide range of powers, the most important of which were external affairs, defence, European education and welfare services.<sup>20</sup> The final constitutional conference, held in London at Carlton House, reflected Britain's desire to secure Southern Rhodesian acceptance of the constitution. Among other matters, the role

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<sup>19</sup> NA, CO 1015/65, no.6, Edgar Parry to C.E. Lambert, 29 December 1951.

<sup>20</sup> Sommerville, 'The Central African Federation', p.389.

of the African Affairs Board was substantially weakened, becoming a select committee of the African parliamentary representatives composed of federal MPs with limited powers to defer issues it considered disadvantageous to Africans to the British government rather than fully independent members with the power to veto discriminatory legislation.<sup>21</sup> Given the initial concern raised over the difference in approach towards native policy in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, it was somewhat surprising that strikingly little attention was paid to mounting African opposition to the federal proposals. On 9 April the scheme survived the referendum in Southern Rhodesia, passing by 25,570 for and 14,729 against; this proved decisive for the British government, who believed that federation was widely supported.<sup>22</sup> Voting on the second reading of the federation bill in Britain in May 1953 passed by a margin of just 26 votes, 247 for and 221 against.<sup>23</sup> The Central African Federation came into existence on 1 August 1953 heralded by a chorus of African opposition.

### *The Origins of African Political Consciousness, 1945-50*

For those few Africans able to make sense of the implications of the scheme, the federation was regarded as a constitutional measure which preserved white settler supremacy at the expense of African socio-economic and constitutional advance.<sup>24</sup> Most disconcerting was the very real possibility that Southern Rhodesia's discriminatory native policy would spread northwards once the Protectorate status

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<sup>21</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa: Part I: Closer Association 1945-1958', p. liii.

<sup>22</sup> Berger, *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule*, p. 124.

<sup>23</sup> Hyam, 'The Geopolitical Origins of the Central African Federation', p. 16.

<sup>24</sup> R[hodes] H[ouse] Library, Oxford, Arthur C[reech] J[ones] P[apers], MSS.Brit.Emp.332, 22/4, 'The views of Congress on Federation', Jan., 1951.



of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was removed. This would have a hugely detrimental impact upon Africans' future development. In the countryside, noted Nophas Kwenje, President of the Salisbury branch of the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC], the spread of Southern Rhodesia's Land Apportionment Act, which reclaimed land for white settlers, would cause 'widespread displacement of Africans from their homes and livelihoods'.<sup>25</sup> In towns, claimed the President of the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress [NRAC], Harry Nkumbula, increased European immigration would result in the extension of the industrial colour-bar, a move that would further preclude African advancement in the labour sphere. The effects of federation would be felt by Africans everywhere, he lamented, with 'little hope' that the African predicament would improve.<sup>26</sup>

African responses to what was widely perceived as an attack on their rights took the form of a concerted campaign to convince the British government to refrain from imposing the federation upon Africans. The campaign waged in the 1950s was rooted in attempts to secure African political representation in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia after 1945. Through welfare societies and native associations, African intellectuals sought in every conceivable way to better their position using constitutional means. These early political organisations operated like pressure groups on behalf of their members, petitioning the government to act upon an impressive range of regional and national issues.<sup>27</sup> At this time, however,

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<sup>25</sup> RH, A[frica] B[ureau] Papers, MSS.Afr.s.1681, 240/1, N.D. Kwenje to A.J.M Banda, 9 Mar., 1952. Kwenje returned to Nyasaland in 1956, where he successfully stood as an NAC candidate in the Legislative Council.

<sup>26</sup> RH, AB, 230/14, Northern Rhodesian ANC Presidential Address, 19, Aug., 1952.

<sup>27</sup> Hooker, J.R., 'Welfare Associations and Other Instruments of Accommodation in the Rhodesias between the World Wars', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Oct., 1966), p.51. Though there were regional differences, the various societies shared certain aims including urging the lowering of tribal barriers, the encouragement of Europeanization through the extension

many administrators looked upon the associations with a great deal of scepticism. As Harold Kittermaster, the Governor of Nyasaland remarked in 1939, the various native associations represented somewhat of a nuisance. Comprising a small minority of the educated elite, they were far from being representative of African opinion in general and far less valuable than the cohort of tribal leaders upon whom his government relied to deal with native matters. He personally preferred, 'to pour cold water on the associations rather than try to regulate or suppress them'.<sup>28</sup>

The Northern Rhodesian administration took a slightly different approach, providing a vent for Africans frustrations by establishing Urban Advisory Councils in heavily populated urban regions. Despite government attempts to ameliorate African concerns, the Councils were seen to lack credibility.<sup>29</sup> They were regarded, L.H. Gann claims, as the prerogative of the elite, failing to attain any meaningful support among Africans at grass roots.<sup>30</sup> In Luanshya, for example, Council meetings throughout 1952 were never attended by more than two-thirds of the councillors, and more usually by only four or five out of a membership of 17; candidates were being returned unopposed and in 1954 only 259 from a possible 10,000 Africans registered a vote.<sup>31</sup> The Councils were exactly what the colonial administration hoped, Rotberg suggests, a political safety valve with 'an absence of real

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of educational opportunities, industrial employment and improved agricultural techniques, and greater representation in government.

<sup>28</sup> Rotberg, R., *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.122.

<sup>29</sup> Berger, *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule*, p.78 The official responsibilities of the councils were to keep the District Commissioner in touch with African opinion, to act as a mouthpiece of government, and to advise DCs on African affairs. Originally, members were nominated by the Administration, but, despite frequent requests by the African intelligentsia, a system of representation was developed using existing societies as a form of electoral college.

<sup>30</sup> Gann, L.H., *A History of Northern Rhodesia Early Days to 1953* (London, 1963), p.349.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

representation'.<sup>32</sup> These early engagements with authority nonetheless represented a crucial phase in the history of Central African nationalism during which the indigenous leadership, like its counterpart in West Africa, recognised the futility of a strictly constitutional, and basically elitist, approach to African politics.

Spurred on by the growing agitation among settlers for amalgamation, educated Africans responded by calling for closer cooperation between native societies under the premise that government would respect the voice of a national African movement more readily than it would listen to the complaints of the old, fragmented associations. In Nyasaland in 1943, the Nyasaland Educated African Council was created. Unlike the native associations, the Council dealt with matters affecting the Protectorate generally and intended to hold regular meetings at which all districts would be represented. Surprisingly, the Nyasaland government was satisfied with the new organisation, but proposed that it be called the Nyasaland African Association on the premise that the term 'Council' conflicted with the business of chiefs and was likely to cause confusion. With official toleration providing a favourable milieu, the Association changed its name to that of the Nyasaland African Congress in May 1944.<sup>33</sup> Reorganisation of political representation did not, however, yield significant progress for the new party.

In Northern Rhodesia, concerted signs that Africans were beginning to organise politically came in May 1946 when the Federation of African Welfare Societies of Northern Rhodesia [FAWSNR], which sought to bring the various welfare and native societies into one association, was formed under the leadership of Dauti Yamba. The formation of the FAWSNR was for Yamba, and indeed others

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<sup>32</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.180.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

who identified themselves in terms of territorial rather than ethnic terms, the first step in developing a national political consciousness. In a letter sent to the governor shortly after its formation, the Federation informed him that it was aiming at 'developing independently of the African Provincial Councils...to break the tribal barriers by endeavouring to foster the spirit of unity among the Africans so that no tribe shall be inferior in the eyes of the Federation'.<sup>34</sup> In July 1948, at only the second general conference of the FAWSNR, the delegates unanimously decided to transform the society into a political party and named it the Northern Rhodesian African Congress [NRAC]. Mbikusita was elected President with Yamba Vice-President. As in Nyasaland, the authorities looked ominously upon these developments. In early 1947, the Secretary for Native Affairs warned in a confidential circular to Provincial Commissioners that Africans were 'entering a difficult phase of race consciousness' and that 'every opportunity must be taken to retain its confidence and guide it into safe channels'.<sup>35</sup>

The immediate post-war years represented an important transition stage in the development of African politics. During this time, Africans not only gained valuable political experience by engaging in some form of dialogue with the colonial state, but they also began to appreciate that satisfying African political ambitions would in future rest upon the extent to which political elites could involve 'uneducated' Africans in political affairs. For the Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the amalgamation issue provided the incentive to extend the struggle for Africans rights to the masses. The years 1945 to 1953 were to prove

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<sup>34</sup> Musambachime, M.C., 'Dauti Yamba's Contribution to the Rise and Growth of Nationalism in Zambia, 1941-1964', *African Affairs*, Vol. 90, No 359 (Apr., 1991), p.266.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.267.

critical in this regard; a time in which the Congresses sought to capitalise upon ill-feeling ;stirred by the debate over Africans' future. African nationalism, still in its infancy, was suddenly thrust into a period of painful adolescence.

### *Translating the Anti-Federation Message: African Mobilisation and the Congress Anti-Federation Campaign, 1950-53*

African opposition to closer association between the Rhodesias was born of long experience with the white man and limited knowledge of his institutions. Within this context the safeguards offered in the compromise scheme for Federation proposed by the British—including preservation of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland's 'protectorate status' and the provision that responsibility for matters directly affecting Africans affairs would be safeguarded by the African Affairs Board—were entirely meaningless. Federation equated to permanent subjection to white settlers in Central Africa, the scheme itself a crude attempt by Central Africa's white minorities to obtain absolute authority over the direction of native policy.<sup>36</sup> As Harry Nkumbula told his followers at a meeting of the Southern Province's African Provincial Council soon after his accession to the Northern Rhodesian Congress Presidency in July 1951,

If we have this Federation, tomorrow we shall have a Dominion in Central Africa ... We are quite aware of what happens to the safeguard which the British Government give to the Colonial people, they are never honoured, they have been violated. If you go into the pages of Colonial history, even without Dominion status, the safeguards and guarantees that we are given by His Majesty's Government go by the board because of pressure coming from settlers ... In view of this I will repeat myself and say on behalf of the people I represent we totally reject Federation.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Resolutions passed by the Northern Rhodesia African Congress*, 21 Jul., 1951.

<sup>37</sup> Nkumbula's speech is taken from Macola, G., *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa: A Biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula* (Basingstoke, 2010), p.33.

Similar arguments were expressed by the Nyasaland African Congress. In a pamphlet entitled, 'Why We Oppose Federation: Our Aims and Objectives', the NAC's Executive Council argued:

We oppose federation not only because of the oppressive racialistic [sic.] policy of Southern Rhodesia, where a white settler minority has arrogated to itself all political power, and seeks, through federation, to extend this obnoxious policy to Nyasaland. The goal of the European settlers is the establishment of a Central African Dominion, like SA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, in which they will have an imperium [sic.] over the African people, doing with them as they please, and denying them equal political and economic rights which they are entitled.<sup>38</sup>

Years of looking southwards to South Africa and Southern Rhodesia had made even the most unsophisticated African too wise to accept their alleged protector's assurances at face value. The solution to the problem, Congress leaders advocated, was for Africans to work towards achieving for themselves self-government, free from discriminatory controls, to be provided with an opportunity to develop without hindrance. 'We have been much humiliated by our partners', Nkumbula remarked. 'We are a race and like any other race on earth we love to rule ourselves. We must have our own Parliament'.<sup>39</sup>

The principal problem facing Congress leaders at this stage was that only a small cohort of politically educated Africans displayed an awareness of the proposals and their implications. The objective of NRAC and NAC agitators, therefore, was to expand and scale-up the anti-federation campaign, making relevant the arguments against the scheme at grass roots in order to prevent the British from imposing the federation on the African majority. The first stage in this process was to transform the Congresses into genuine political parties. In 1951, for

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<sup>38</sup> B[ritish] L[ibrary], London, E[ndangered] A[rchives] P[roject] 121, Papers of the A[frican] N[ational] C[ongress] of Northern Rhodesia 5/4, Nyasaland African Congress Pamphlet: 'Why We Oppose Federation: Our Aims and Objectives', undated. 1952.

<sup>39</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/81, Nkumbula speech to the Working Committee, Kitwe, 25 Dec., 1951.

example, Nkumbula embarked upon an extensive organisational drive, touring Northern Rhodesia's provinces emphasising to local Congress organisers the need to maintain registers of paid-up members and donations. Early in 1952, Nkumbula established the first permanent party headquarters in Chilenje, Lusaka, redoubling efforts to streamline the Congress' financial running by publishing an official schedule of membership and yearly subscription fees.<sup>40</sup> By May of that year, Nkumbula claimed a total membership amounting to some 20,000 people in 75 branches. As Giacomo Macola suggests, such estimates may have been overly optimistic, but the rise in the number of Congress subscribers helped facilitate the employment of a number of salaried provincial organising secretaries who immediately began the process of enlisting and registering new members.<sup>41</sup> The new approach became apparent in June 1952 when the adjective 'national' was added to the name of the party. This was a clear statement of intent; the African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia [ANC] was intending to be a 'national' party, one which would represent *all* Africans within the territory.<sup>42</sup>

One of the key tactics used by Congress leaders to win support for their campaign between 1950 and 1953 was to exacerbate African fears pertaining to settler domination. For both parties, the matter of land alienation featured prominently. The fear of land loss was felt throughout Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and, as such, it became an important means by which the Congresses could make relevant to Africans at grass roots the complex objections to

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<sup>40</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.43.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

<sup>42</sup> RH, FCB 101/3, Lewanika to the FCB, 12 Apr., 1952.

federation.<sup>43</sup> Land possessed divine significance for Africans in Central Africa; it was an inherent part of their heritage and tradition. It tied Africans to their ancestors and their kin, and played an important function in power relations between chiefs and their people.<sup>44</sup> Land was life; losing it was a potent symbol for annihilation. When Nkumbula therefore asked rhetorically whether Welensky would remove Africans from their land once federation had been established, he was doing so because the matter struck at the very heart of Africans' belief systems.<sup>45</sup> By 1951, several provincial officials noted with concern the extent to which the ANC had been successful in linking together the issue of land alienation with federation. As J.E. Passmore, District Commissioner in Southern Province, noted in his 1951 annual review,

The general attitude of Africans is one of intense suspicion that the Europeans are plotting to take away their land. Every political move or development proposal is viewed in this light. The political minded have easily been able to take advantage of and increase this feeling to whip up opposition to Amalgamation and Federation ... Mr Harry Nkumbula has found the fear of loss of land ready-made for him to work on; he has done so very successfully.<sup>46</sup>

American anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker, conducting research in the Copperbelt in Northern Rhodesia during the early 1950s, lent credence to Passmore's observations. The land loss issue was by 1953 ingrained within African society, she said. It was 'dragged into almost every interview and conversation, regardless of context or relevancy' and most Africans, 'with or without education,

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<sup>43</sup> Gewald, J.B., 'Rumours of Mau Mau in Northern Rhodesia, 1950-1960', *Afrika Focus*, Vol., 22, No.1, (2009), p.44.

<sup>44</sup> See Powdermaker, H., 'Communication and Social Changes Based on a Field Study in northern Rhodesia', *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Ser. II, Vol. 17, No. 5, (Mar., 1955), pp.437-439.

<sup>45</sup> *Rhodesia Sunday Mail*, 24 Aug., 1952. Welensky predicted 'a vast new drive' of over 500,000 immigrants into Central Africa. For Nkumbula's speech see Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.33.

<sup>46</sup> Quote taken from Gewald, 'Rumours of Mau Mau in Northern Rhodesia', p.43.



young and old', had 'a compulsive need to talk about [federation] and the related fear of losing their land'.<sup>47</sup>

NRAC and NAC attempts to play upon fears pertaining to the extinction of their land rights and culture created an atmosphere in which uncertainty and suspicion thrived. This came to be reflected in the growth of several rumours, conceived and populated by Congress activists, which underpinned African understanding of federation and all that it entailed. Early in 1952, for instance, a rumour circulated in Northern Rhodesia that the British and Northern Rhodesian authorities were attempting to sell poisoned sugar to Africans. Peter Fraenkel, a broadcaster working for the Northern Rhodesian Broadcasting Service, described in his memoirs the moment at which he interrupted two African employees using a duplicating machine to make copies of a 'Private Circular' warning Africans that the 'House of Laws' in London had decided to put poisoned sugar on sale to Africans that would cause children to be born dead and men to become impotent.<sup>48</sup> On the Copperbelt, the sale of sugar dropped suddenly. From sugar, the rumour turned to tinned 'human' meat, which was being sold to Africans to break their opposition to federation.<sup>49</sup> Rumours soon spread to Nyasaland and parts of Southern Rhodesia, coinciding with the re-emergence of the *banyama* (vampire-men) myth which posited that African members of the pro-federation, white-led Capricorn Africa Society, founded in 1949 to campaign for closer association, were kidnapping Africans and selling them to Europeans. The rumour was so strong in Lusaka, M.C. Musambachime noted, that children were kept away from school and people

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<sup>47</sup> Powdermaker, H., *Copper Town: Changing Africa, The Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* (New York, 1962), p.63.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Fraenkel, P., *Wayaleshi* (London, 1959), p.199.

became afraid to walk the streets at night.<sup>50</sup> Keen to exploit political capital generated by the rumours, the ANC made several attempts to legitimise African suspicions. In December 1952, Congress passed a resolution accusing the government of complicity in the attacks on innocent Africans for 'failing to deal with the Vampire men threatening the peace and order of the country'.<sup>51</sup> To all intents and purposes, Congress leaders were trying to give added credence to the *banyama* rumour.

African politicians did not *create* the rumours circulating in the early 1950s, but they were an important part of the ANC's early mobilisation campaign. The *banyama* myth, for instance, had a long history stretching back to the 1930s when stories linking the enforcement of state-imposed agricultural practices with men who would systematically kidnap and kill Africans, draining their blood, spread into Central Africa from Tanganyika.<sup>52</sup> Rumours were, nonetheless, an important means by which federation could be linked inextricably with European socio-economic and political domination, a means by which the anti-federation message could be translated into a 'usable lexicon of protest'.<sup>53</sup> The fact that they spread so rapidly throughout Central Africa at this time, Luise White suggests, reflected the deep concerns of the people hearing the story. The African masses expressed themselves

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<sup>50</sup> Musambachime, M.C., 'The Impact of Rumor: The Case of the Banyama (Vampire Men) Scare in Northern Rhodesia, 1930-1964', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1988), p.212. The term 'Capricorn' came to stigmatise any African believed by his fellow Africans to be opposed to Congress and its policies or who appeared to be moderate or pro-European in his views.

<sup>51</sup> Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, p.212.

<sup>52</sup> White, L., *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (California, 2000), p.45. See also Shepperson, G., *Myth and Reality in Malawi* (Northwestern University Press, 1966), p.7.

<sup>53</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.31.

in ways which unduly emphasised the supernatural, but their fears were genuine.<sup>54</sup>

Although many might not have been able to comprehend fully the complexities of the federation debate, the popularisation of rumours at least indicated that many were aware of the negative impact that federation was likely to have upon their future.

In July 1952, R.S. Hudson of the Colonial Office ominously reported after a tour of Central Africa that the Congresses were having 'all the running now', adding to their prestige as a result of their campaigning efforts.<sup>55</sup> In a particularly enlightening report from the Mzimba District, the Nyasaland Special Branch, the intelligence wing of the British South Africa Police responsible for matters of national security, noted that everywhere the NAC had begun to turn African opinion decisively against federation. When the preliminary White Paper detailing federal proposals was published, Africans 'had been willing to discuss the paper with every sign of interest'. When Congress arranged a meeting to counter a Provincial Council conference to discuss the paper, however, the mood of Africans changed to 'one of obstinate refusal to discuss anything connected with it at any level'.<sup>56</sup> In a report to Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttelton, Governor of Nyasaland Geoffrey Colby agreed that African opposition was 'hardening as realisation of what is at stake spreads to the non-vocal masses'.<sup>57</sup>

Congress efforts were undoubtedly strengthened by the failure of the territorial governments to effectively publicise the federal scheme. 'It does not help

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<sup>54</sup> White, L., 'Vampire Priests of Central Africa: African Debates about Labor and Religion in Colonial Northern Zambia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Oct., 1993), p.771.

<sup>55</sup> NA, CO 1015/120, Hudson to Williams, 13 Jul., 1952.

<sup>56</sup> NA CO 1015/120, no.6, Report on African Opinion on Federation in the Mzimba District, 12 Aug., 1952.

<sup>57</sup> NA CO 1015/65, no.3, Colby to Lyttelton, 19 Mar., 1952.

that Africans are not receiving a lead from the Government', wrote Bishop Oswald Thorne of Nyasaland in a statement on the federation. Africans consequently became 'very suspicious' because they felt the 'government itself was not strongly in favour of the proposals'.<sup>58</sup> In the struggle for African public opinion, official pro-federal propaganda was generally ineffective, falling short of conveying a simple and convincing message outlining how federation would work to Africans' benefit. The level of disagreement at local government level served only to further undermine efforts to win indigenous support. Many District Commissioners, reported E.C. Greenall, then serving as a DC in Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia, held little regard for the scheme and as such were less inclined to publicly proclaim its virtues to African citizens.<sup>59</sup>

### ***African Opposition to the Central African Federation***

Popular mobilisation against federation was an important means by which the Congresses hoped to convince the British that disapproval of the scheme was universally shared and, subsequently, that the Colonial Office ought to reconsider the logic of imposing it upon its African citizens. Official Congress opposition to the federation assumed several different forms, all of which involved drawing maximum public attention to African objections. Numerous statements and petitions each highlighting the main points on which the scheme was deemed unfair to African interests were made to the British government and the British

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<sup>58</sup> RH, AB 243/1, Bishop of Nyasaland, Statement on Federation, Jan., 1953.

<sup>59</sup> Coe, D.G., Greenall, E.C., *Kaunda's Gaoler: Memories of District Officer in Northern Rhodesia and Zambia* (London, 2003). Greenall remarked, 'It was a fact that in private discussions most of us believed that the constitution was unsatisfactory because it was so manifestly unfair', p.57.

press.<sup>60</sup> In a display of open defiance, African leaders publicly boycotted the Lancaster House conference convened in April 1952 to discuss federation. Instead, the NAC and NRAC used funds of over £7,000 collected from among their supporters to send a delegation to Britain to ‘educate the British public in Central African Affairs’.<sup>61</sup> ‘We have been entrusted by our people’, read the NRAC’s press statement, ‘with the task of explaining to the British people what are the hopes and fears which we in Central African have today and why we felt it necessary to come here in order to appeal that the British Government reconsider its decision to establish Federation in Central Africa’.<sup>62</sup>

The advance of Kwame Nkrumah’s Convention Peoples Party [CPP] in the Gold Coast, following the territory’s March 1952 elections which gave the CPP a majority in the Legislative Assembly, provided added impetus to the NRAC and NAC anti-federation campaign. By ignoring African objections, they separately argued, Britain was failing in its responsibilities to secure the interests of its African citizens. If the Gold Coast could achieve self-government, asked Godwin Lewanika, the first president-general of the NRAC, why were Africans in Central Africa not entitled to demand the same?<sup>63</sup> Following the publication of the *Draft Federal Scheme* in April, the Congresses intensified their efforts.<sup>64</sup> In Northern Rhodesia, the NRAC began drafting alternative plans for constitutional development, the first stage of which was the implementation of parity of representation in the Legislative Council

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<sup>60</sup> NA, CO 1015/120, no.2, Extract from Political Intelligence, May, 1950.

<sup>61</sup> Of this sum, £4,000 was raised from Northern Rhodesia, the rest from Nyasaland. As remarked by Reverend Michael Scott, this was ‘a tremendous sum for these people to get together and answers another story the newspapers like to print that the whole anti-Federation movement is the work of a few intelligentsia’. RH, AB 230/14, Michael Scott to Africa Bureau, 6 May, 1952.

<sup>62</sup> RH, AB 231/2, African Delegation Press Statement, 28 Apr., 1952.

<sup>63</sup> RH, F[abian] C[olonial] B[ureau] Papers, 101/3, Lewanika to the FCB, 12 Apr., 1952.

<sup>64</sup> Cmnd. 8573, *Draft Federal Scheme*, 1952.

between African and European representatives. In a Presidential address delivered in Lusaka, Nkumbula was unequivocal in his stance that Africans would not back down from their demands. 'The best government for the black people is a government fully manned and run by the black people of Africa', he commented. 'I do not accept white man's Governments. They to me are foreign and foreign they will remain'.<sup>65</sup> During the last stages of debate in British Parliament, the ANC's anti-federation campaign culminated in Nkumbula's symbolic burning of the final *Federal Scheme for Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland* before a Lusaka audience of 800 Africans and six prominent chiefs, threatening widespread unrest if Britain continued to ignore African grievances.<sup>66</sup> The introduction of the Federation, Nkumbula warned, would cause great 'unrest' in Central Africa since there was 'no force in the world' which could destroy the love and aspirations for freedom and independence among Africans.<sup>67</sup>

The reaction in Britain was equally strong in Nyasaland. In April, 3,000 Africans crammed into the market square in Blantyre to attend an emergency conference of the Nyasaland Congress. They listened to the chiefs who had visited Britain, to a summary of a letter from Dr Hastings Banda, future leader of the NAC then working in London as a medical doctor, and to a speech given by the Reverend Michael Scott, the director of the African Bureau, before resolving to meet the imposition of federation by 'the strongest non-violent resistance'.<sup>68</sup> Chief Mwase refused to attend the Queen's coronation whilst Chief Gomani obstinately ordered

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<sup>65</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 9/39, Nkumbula Presidential Address, Lusaka, 19 Aug., 1952.

<sup>66</sup> Cmnd. 8754, *Federal Scheme for Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland Prepared by a Conference Held in London, January, 1953*.

<sup>67</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 9/49, Nkumbula Statement on Federal White Paper, 22 Mar., 1953.

<sup>68</sup> RH, AB 231/2, Press Statement regarding Federation prepared by Hastings Banda, 22 Apr., 1952.

his people to disregard all agricultural, forestry and veterinary laws and suggested that they refuse to pay taxes.<sup>69</sup> In spite of pleas from NAC leaders to adhere closely to a campaign of non-violent resistance, reports of intimidation of Africans voicing their support for federation became ever more frequent. In August 1952, Chief Kabalata reported to *The Livingstone Mail* that he now needed close police supervision to 'ensure that the more hot-headed do not interfere with him' after having spoken in favour of federation.<sup>70</sup> Similar to the Northern Rhodesian ANC, the NAC besieged the Nyasaland and British governments with pleas and petitions. An indication of the far-reaching and ambitious campaign was seen in the petition sent to the United Nations questioning the legality of imposing Federation and asking whether the scheme was compatible with the UN Charter, Article 73.<sup>71</sup>

In their efforts to prevent federation, Congress were ably supported by a number of liberally oriented groups in Britain and, later, the British Labour Party. One of the first organisations to leap to the defence of the Congresses was the Fabian Colonial Bureau [FCB]. Founded in 1940 as a special department of the Fabian Society in order to facilitate research, information gathering and the development of constructive ideas on colonial policy, the FCB worked closely with the Labour Party in Parliament, establishing a panel of members for the purpose of asking informed Questions and supplying them with information and inviting MPs to sit on various study groups and sub-committees.<sup>72</sup> The FCB provided a lead for

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<sup>69</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, p. 197.

<sup>70</sup> *The Livingstone Mail*, 24 Jul., 1952.

<sup>71</sup> RH, AB, 243/5, Minutes of a Meeting at the UN at which the Petition stating African objections to the Central African Federation was discussed, 19 Oct., 1953. Initial petition can be seen in file 231/2, NAC Petition to the United Nations, 18 May, 1952. Notes, Article 73 of the UN Charter affirmed the UN's responsibility to secure the well-being of the inhabitants of non self-governing territories

<sup>72</sup> The Bureau's first official member of staff and, with Arthur Creech Jones, one of its founders, was Rita Hinden, a South African-born economist who had impressed upon the Executive of the Fabian

the British left in regards to colonial issues. In 1952, for example, Reverend Guthrie Michael Scott and several of his friends founded the Africa Bureau, an organisation dedicated to advise and support Africans who wished to oppose by constitutional means political decisions affecting their lives and futures imposed by alien governments. Drawing a bulk of their membership from the Labour Party, the initial architects of federation, the FCB and the Africa Bureau did not oppose the scheme altogether. Their principal objections centred upon the refusal of the government to acknowledge the legitimacy of African concerns. 'Make no mistake', wrote Michael Scott, who served as the Africa Bureau's Director, 'Britain should not proceed on the false assumption that the opposition to Federation can safely be ignored as something quite unsubstantial and ineffectual'.<sup>73</sup> Arthur Creech Jones, Labour's former Colonial Secretary and founding member of the FCB, agreed. 'African opinion', he stated, 'is exceptionally well nourished and informed. It is not as blind and ignorant as these politicians think'.<sup>74</sup> What was needed, wrote the FCB in May 1952, was a reappraisal of the federation's *raison d'être*. 'What does 'partnership' mean ... Does it mean 'partnership' between separate racial communities, whatever their size and state of development? Does it mean 'equal' 'partnership', or 'senior and junior' 'partnership'?<sup>75</sup> Parliament soon became one of the key arenas for debate over the federation. In March 1952, for instance, the Labour Party passed a resolution condemning the 'idea of Federation' unless the

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Society the need for a permanent department which would deal specifically with colonial problems from a socialist viewpoint.

<sup>73</sup> RH, AB 230/6 f.1. Letter to Parliament and the Press, 14 Mar., 1952.

<sup>74</sup> RH, CJP 22/3, Creech Jones to Benson, Apr., 1952.

<sup>75</sup> NA, CO 1015/701, Fabian Colonial Bureau Pamphlet, *'Advance to Democracy: A Report to the Fabian Colonial Bureau on the Implications of 'Partnership' in Multi-Racial Societies'*, 8 May, 1952.



native populations gave their 'full assent'.<sup>76</sup> Innumerable petitions and letters were sent to government officials and prominent domestic newspapers, arguing in favour of greater consultation with African opinion.

The impact of anti-colonial activities upon the Conservative government's Central African policy is somewhat difficult to measure. Whilst the campaign almost certainly helped enhance public awareness of the government's actions, they were generally unable to exercise significant influence over the course of events in Central Africa. Part of the reason lay in the fact that 'federation' had been a Labour initiative. The Party, and indeed its supporters, thus found themselves unable, and perhaps unwilling, to turn its back on a scheme for which it had been responsible for setting in motion.

Anti-colonialists did, however, enjoy much greater success in influencing the African campaign. This owed much, in part, to the close and personal connections that developed between leading left-wing British political figures and Congress leaders. During his time studying at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the late 1940s, Harry Nkumbula was brought into contact with individuals such as Rita Hinden, secretary of the FCB, Harold Laski, then chairman of the Labour Party, and Fenner Brockway, later to become leader of the influential Movement for Colonial Freedom [MCF], all of whom later provided support to Nkumbula and the ANC in the fight against Federation.<sup>77</sup> Anti-colonialists corresponded regularly with both the ANC and NAC, providing both parties with

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<sup>76</sup> *H[ansard] C[ommons] D[ebates]*, vol. 497, Cols. 208-334, 4 March 1952. Griffiths commented, 'If in our policy we do not express the spirit of David Livingstone, it may have a very bad effect indeed on our relations with the Africans in those territories'.

<sup>77</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.21-22. See also Sherwood, M., *Kwame Nkrumah: The Years Abroad, 1935-1947*, (Michigan, 1996), p.185-187.

small donations that helped them to function in their formative years and offering to print and distribute Congress literature. It was advice given to the politically-inexperienced Congresses about the ways in which their campaign might impact more favourably on the British government which proved especially valuable, however. It was perhaps no coincidence that the Congress campaign in Britain closely resembled tentative suggestions made by Michael Scott to the NAC. Although Africans had chosen to boycott the Lancaster House conference, it was vital, he told A.J.M Banda, Secretary of the NAC, that the Congress should make every effort to send able delegates to Britain to put forward their case against federation.

The record will, I think, show how misinformed opinion is in England. It is this fact which moves me to write to you in the hope that ... you should have trustworthy representatives here who can explain your views to the press and public in Britain and make sure that when the matter is again debated in Parliament Members will have an opportunity of hearing your case.<sup>78</sup>

Thomas Fox-Pitt meanwhile, a former Provincial Commissioner in Northern Rhodesia and future Director of the Anti-Slavery Society, a post he took up in 1953, was proactive in securing the aid of experienced former Colonial Office officials, including Creech Jones, in assisting ANC delegates to draft their case against federation during their visit to London.<sup>79</sup> These early exchanges were more perhaps important for what they represented rather than for their achievements. They not only provided the Congresses with an insight into the decision making process in London, bringing political leaders into contact with senior Colonial Office officials for the first time, but they also helped stimulate and encourage African politicisation by legitimising Congress objections to the federal scheme.

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<sup>78</sup> RH, AB 240/134, Michael Scott to A.J.M Banda, 9 Mar., 1952.

<sup>79</sup> RH, CJP 22/4, Fox-Pitt to Creech Jones, 9 Feb., 1952.

### *The Failure of the Anti-Federation Campaign: African Political Development and British Perceptions of African Nationalism, 1950-53*

By 1953 it was undeniable that there existed strong African opposition to the federation. Why, then, did the British government fail to acknowledge African concerns? Why, when Africans in West Africa were gaining political advancement, did Britain appear reticent to provide similar opportunities for Africans in Central Africa, instead handing full governmental responsibility to European settlers? Part of the reason lay in the failure of the Congresses to mount an altogether united and convincing anti-Federation campaign. In both territories ANC and NAC branch formation was uneven and poorly coordinated, with many provincial, district and branch executives enjoying greater autonomy than its inexperienced leaders could wisely utilise. Both parties also suffered from chronic financial difficulties, lacking the steady income required to finance their operations.<sup>80</sup> Colin Legum, a leading anti-apartheid activist then working as Commonwealth correspondent for the *Sunday Express*, brought these problems to the attention of the Africa Bureau, admitting his 'shock' at the weakness of the ANC's organisation which made it 'physically impossible for them to control and direct a large-scale campaign on the basis of their resources'. He also observed growing division between 'the activists and the go-slowers', made worse by the absence of strong leadership.<sup>81</sup>

The division over tactics and policy in Northern Rhodesia was most evident in April 1953, when the African Mine Workers Union [AMWU], led by Lawrence Katilungu, failed to participate in a 'day of national prayer' organised by Nkumbula

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<sup>80</sup> By 1952, despite having raised over £4,000 to fund a delegation to London, for instance, ANC's accounts were overdrawn. See Mulford, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence*, p.45.

<sup>81</sup> RH, AB 237/2, Legum to the African Bureau, 2 Sept., 1953.

despite having initially given their word to do so.<sup>82</sup> Although evidence suggests that African trade union leaders were initially in support of Congress, having been assigned eight out of eleven seats on the Supreme Action Council – an ANC group charged with responsibility of leading the anti-Federation charge, Katilungu was a faithful supporter of the Northern Rhodesian Government's trade union policy and was therefore unlikely to jeopardise the future prospects of his organisation by acting against the future settler government of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>83</sup> In Nyasaland too, the presence of a group of chiefs and politicians who publicly flouted Congress' policy of boycotting all discussions on federation also served to undermine the claim to be fully representative of all Africans in relation to political issues. Such men were 'quislings', wrote A.J. Banda, men who were acting against the 'expressed feelings of the people'.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the fact that the ANC and NAC had manoeuvred into a position in which they were able to exploit African discontent, therefore, some colonial officials in Britain and Central Africa had good reason to question whether Congress leaders were capable of building an organisation that could maintain a permanent following. As G. Howe, a Provincial Commissioner in Lusaka informed the Northern Rhodesian Director of Information, this was not 'the mark of a well organised, efficient movement':

On the whole it cannot be said that Congress stand to represent the majority in this Province. The population here is either disinterested or fed-

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<sup>82</sup> Parpart, J.L., 'Class Consciousness among the Zambian Copper Miners, 1950-1968', *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Etudes Africaines*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1987), p.59.

<sup>83</sup> Berger, *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule*, p.134.

<sup>84</sup> NA, CO 1015/404, 'The Truth about the African Protectorate Council', by A.J. Banda, 9 September 1951.

up with Federation and it is only when Congress agitators put in an appearance that the question of Federation flares up for a few hours.<sup>85</sup>

Both Congresses thus presented somewhat of a menace to colonial authorities, not only because rapid African politicisation emerged as a challenge to colonial supremacy, but because the very nature of African political protest was deemed unpredictable and so, potentially destabilising to the delicate political situation in Central Africa.

The extent to which reports 'on the spot' were likely to have been a true reflection of the situation as it manifested is unclear, but with the 'savage' and 'violent' Mau Mau rebellion gathering pace in Kenya – considered by settlers as the epitome of colonial society gone wrong – it is not beyond the realms of possibility to suggest that the 'African threat' in Central Africa would likely have been exacerbated in order to encourage the Colonial Office to expedite the passage of federation legislation in order to narrow the remit for African opposition.<sup>86</sup>

The response of colonial and settler authorities to the African anti-federation campaign was to demonise Congress leaders, denying them the legitimacy needed to convince the British government that their objections were well-reasoned and genuine. This was especially apparent when, in early 1952, the District Officer in Kalomo attempted to turn the poison sugar rumour on its head by accusing Nkumbula of using his links with an African tea-room in Lusaka to 'stage-manage' a discovery of a drug stole from Kasenga mission capable of causing

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<sup>85</sup> NA, CO 1015/120, Confidential Report on Public Opinion, G. Howe, Provincial Commissioner, to the Director of Information, Lusaka, 15 Sept., 1952.

<sup>86</sup> NA, D[ominions] O[ffice] 35/4778, Northern Rhodesian Political Intelligence Report, Aug., 1954. Rumours of Mau Mau spreading into Central Africa became rife in 1954. Intelligence reports noted with ever increasing frequency the links between the ANC-NAC and Mau Mau. In August, ANC organiser Nephthys Tembo had called for 'militant action' at the Congress Party Conference, and that threats ought to be made 'to induce the government to comply with the wishes of Congress'. Rumours of links between Congress and Mau Mau gathered momentum throughout the year.

abortions. The panic spreading among Africans thereafter was not, therefore, reflective of genuine anti-federation sentiment.<sup>87</sup> Further attempts to malign the increasingly popular Nkumbula were made by K.M. Chittenden, the District Commissioner for Namwala, the ANC President's home district, who wrote to the Provincial Commissioner of the Southern Province suggesting 'a little publicity carefully put around about his private life might be advantageous'.<sup>88</sup> Clearly intending to play upon growing fears in Britain that the Soviet Union was actively seeking to infiltrate popular African nationalist movements, Roy Welensky later added fuel to the fire by drawing explicit links with the Congresses and communism. Numerous statements were made to the effect that colonial authorities ought to 'face up to the fact' that communist sentiment was 'rapidly gaining ground, particularly in areas such as the Copperbelt'.<sup>89</sup>

Although the effect of such statements is unclear, they almost certainly helped to heighten tension within Central Africa. This came to be reflected in the methods adopted by the governments of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia to clamp down upon African disturbances once Federation came into existence on 1 August 1953. This was most evident in the series of riots that erupted in Cholo, Nyasaland, when in August 1953 over 5,000 Africans assembled at Cholo boma to protest about the imposition of higher rents for land. Once village headmen were arrested, the protesting crowd proceeded to riot, killing 11 Africans.<sup>90</sup> Recalling the events, former civil servant and Congress member George Nyondo, then a young

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<sup>87</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesian Political Intelligence Report, Feb., 1954.

<sup>88</sup> Chittenden quote taken from Gewald, 'Rumours of Mau Mau in Northern Rhodesia', p.46: Chittenden to Southern Province Provincial Commissioner, 2 Sept., 1952.

<sup>89</sup> RH, WP 617/5, Welensky to Gore-Browne, 2 Oct., 1952.

<sup>90</sup> RH, AB, 237/2, Report on Nyasaland, the Cholo Affair, Aug., 1953.

boy of 13, stated in interview that he had been 'shocked' and saddened by the actions of the soldiers used to quell unrest in Blantyre. 'They were very, very violent', he said. 'We felt afraid to come out of our home after we had heard what the government were doing to the people'.<sup>91</sup> Occurring against the backdrop of the anti-Federation campaign, it was initially assumed that the disturbances were a manifestation of anti-federal sentiment and, as such, warranted harsh reprisal to prevent an increase in agitation that might lead to a larger insurgency akin to Mau Mau. After a thorough investigation into the event, however, a report concluded that the disturbances had been ostensibly 'local' in character and had in fact 'nothing to do with Federation'.<sup>92</sup> But this was no mild affair; state suppression of the disturbances had been 'skilful' and 'ruthless', and left an indelible imprint on the minds of Africans in regards to what life under the Federation would entail.<sup>93</sup>

### ***British Government Responses to the African Anti-Federation Campaign***

Officials in London remained sceptical about Africans' capacity to voice *legitimate* opposition to a scheme which might, in the event, prove beneficial to their interests. As indicated by Henry Hopkinson, a Colonial Office official despatched to the Rhodesias and Nyasaland in 1952 to investigate African objections to federation, this led to the supposition that between 90 and 95 per cent of Africans 'knew nothing and cared little about federation'.<sup>94</sup> Educated opinion 'hardly existed' and the criticisms levied against it 'had little or nothing to do with the issue

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with George Nydondo, Zomba, 31 Aug., 2011.

<sup>92</sup> NA DO 35/6851, Minutes by D Williams and WAW Clark, 25-27 Aug., 1953.

<sup>93</sup> RH, AB 237/2, Report on the Political Situation in Nyasaland, Colin Legum, Aug., 1953.

<sup>94</sup> NA, CO 1015/144, Press Conference given by Henry Hopkinson, Minister of State at the Colonial Office, 29 Aug., 1952.

at all'.<sup>95</sup> Hopkinson's views of course reflected a desire to press ahead with federation in as expedient a manner as possible, but, as Kate Crehan suggests the tendency to view African political development in these terms was intimately related to the prevailing belief that Africans in Central Africa were still very much part of a 'tribal' society, quite different from their African brethren in the Gold Coast.<sup>96</sup> As the Commonwealth Relations Secretary, Lord Ismay, commented to the Governor of Southern Rhodesia in 1952, Central Africa was a very special case. The average Rhodesian African was 'of the mental calibre of a British child of ten', and if Britain was to fulfil its role as Governess properly, 'we have got to give him better prospects and better education before we can think of full political emancipation'.<sup>97</sup>

For Britain, the dismissal of both domestic and African opposition was grounded in the conviction that Federation would best serve Africans' interests. In 1953, Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttelton later remarked, it was deemed unfeasible to grant universal suffrage to 'primitive' Central Africans and hope that they might run and build a modern state.<sup>98</sup> If eventual African advancement were to occur it could only take place in the context of rising economic prosperity and harmonious race relations, which would eventually permit the gradual participation of Africans in the legislature. Federation thus offered an opportunity to 'educate' Africans

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Crehan, K., "Tribes' and the People Who Read Books: Managing History in Colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Special Issue for Terry Ranger (Jun., 1997), pp. 203-218, p.206.

<sup>97</sup> NA, DO 121/146, Ismay to Kennedy, 9 February 1952. It is important to note that policy makers in the early 1950s made a clear distinction between Africans in Central Africa and Africans in regions where progress to self-government had already been made, such as the Gold Coast. Africans there were seen to be far more 'educated' than Central Africans.

<sup>98</sup> Lord Chandos, *The Memoirs of Lord Chandos* (London, 1962), p.388. As early as 1948 Andrew Cohen had also remarked on the 'backward state of Africans' and the 'paucity of candidates' capable of playing a useful role in the Legislative Council. CO 525/205, letter from AB Cohen to Geoffrey Colby, Governor of Nyasaland, 23 July 1948.



politically, moderating perceived radical tendencies and thereby circumventing the problem of competing nationalisms in a strategically and economically pivotal region. Crucially, the partial fulfilment of settler amalgamation goals would preserve the British connection, providing the Colonial Office with a voice, however distant, in Central African affairs. As Lord Chandos affirmed, 'if our way of leading these nations to self-government and independence was to prevail, federation seemed to us to be essential'.<sup>99</sup>

When African protest *did* materialise it was considered to be dangerous and potentially destabilising in an already politically volatile region. As correspondence with officials in Central Africa indicated, the signs were ominous. 'We know that both Congresses are in close liaison', reported Colby from Nyasaland. 'Declarations have been made that strikes and civil disobedience will be organised if federation is imposed; in such conditions, African excitability or racial feeling might easily precipitate incidents which would lead to serious trouble'.<sup>100</sup> If the Congress campaign continued to gather momentum, Britain could soon be faced with a militant anti-colonial nationalist movement set firmly on a collision course with belligerent Central African settlers, themselves threatening to sever ties with the British and turn instead to South Africa. The dangers arising from such a predicament would be 'unthinkable', remarked Labour's then Commonwealth Secretary Gordon Walker at a Cabinet meeting in May 1951, conclusions later supplemented by GH Baxter, a civil servant at the Commonwealth Relations Office,

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<sup>99</sup> Chandos, *Memoirs*, pg 387.

<sup>100</sup> NA, CO 1015/65, Colby to Lyttelton, 19 Mar., 1952.

in November.<sup>101</sup> The effects of such conflict would not only spread southwards, potentially creating a much larger inter-racial conflict, but Britain's reputation as a colonial power would also be damaged irrevocably. In these circumstances, commented William Gorell-Barnes, Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, Britain would be left powerless, and would permanently lose influence over African development.<sup>102</sup>

Failing to acknowledge African objections was undoubtedly a risky strategy, but short-term alienation of the African community was regarded as essential for the preservation of Africans' long-term interests. Stanley Evans, Conservative MP for Wednesbury, best summed up the government's attitude in his statement that, 'there is a moment in history when by giving an inch one can save a yard. Later by offering a mile one cannot save an inch. Of this I am certain: the long-term answer cannot be found in racial segregation'.<sup>103</sup> The government would face a hard task defending the scheme in the initial instance, but opposition need not worry them unduly, concluded Oliver Lyttelton and Lord Swinton, the Conservative Party's new Commonwealth Relations Secretary: protest in Central Africa itself would be of short duration. In Britain, the Labour party would fight it, but that must be faced. The 'more emotional elements' – the Africa Bureau, the Fabians – were 'hardly open to argument'; the only way of convincing them was 'to implement the scheme and to show that it worked successfully and to nobody's detriment'.<sup>104</sup> The scheme was not, then, a hastily conceived reaction to settler nationalism, and South African

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<sup>101</sup> NA, CAB 128/19/CM (51) 3414, conclusions 7 May, 1951. See also NA, DO 35/3601, minutes by Baxter, 27 Nov. 1951.

<sup>102</sup> NA, CO 1015/120, minute by Gorrell-Barnes, 18 July 1952.

<sup>103</sup> NA, CO 1015/70, Notes on the Proposed Central African Federation by Stanley Evans, 10 Apr., 1952.

<sup>104</sup> NA, CAB 129/57/C (52)445, memo 16 Dec. 1952.

expansionism. Rather, there was a genuine optimism that, if given time, Federation would eventually become a progressive, multiracial dominion, a prominent symbol of Britain's imperial legacy. The development of African nationalism might not have initially featured in Britain's justifications for the Federation, but it almost certainly consolidated officials' approach.

### *Conclusion*

In the late 1940s, African politics was by and large the domain of the African educated elite. Incensed that the British appeared to be conceding to settler demands for closer association, Congress leaders, self-appointed representatives of African political opinion and at this stage only small voices in the African polity, agreed that the only means of preventing the spread of settler domination rested upon their capacity to politicise the African masses, disseminating anti-Federation sentiment throughout Central Africa. By 1952, officials at the Colonial Office were forced to concede that the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian Congresses were beginning to win over large sections of the African people, translating the complex political message against Federation into a usable lexicon of protest that oriented around fear of land alienation and permanent subjection to European ascendancy. But whilst both parties were successful in raising African antipathy to the scheme, the rise of the Congress parties was rapid and unexpected. In British circles, it was subsequently an easy transition to regard African opposition as immature and unrepresentative of African opinion. Given the extent to which the Congresses had neglected to establish a coherent, long-term, political programme, and considering the pressure applied to the British by Central Africa's settler community, opinion

prevailed that political opinion voiced at this time was potentially threatening to Central African stability. In spite of their protests, African opposition to the scheme was by-passed.

Contrary to John Darwin's claim that Britain could 'neither see, nor hear', African protest, this chapter hopes to have demonstrated that Federation was also in fact a response to what was perceived to be a burgeoning strain of African nationalism incompatible with the political composition of the region.<sup>105</sup> Views of African protest, then, were at least in part conditioned by Britain's relationship with the settler community. In this respect, parallels may be drawn with Philip Murphy's pro-settler argument—that Federation was a response to concerns over the alienation of an economically and politically influential group in Central Africa threatening to sever ties with their former British allies if closer association was not forthcoming. The intention here is not to advocate a major reappraisal of the debate pertaining to the Federation's origins. Rather, by focussing upon the manner of African political development, and its interaction with the colonial and British sources, it is entirely feasible to suggest that the growth of nationalism helped consolidate Britain's commitment to the federal panacea in 1953.

Although unforeseen at the time, the failure to give a sympathetic hearing to Africans not only caused widespread hostility towards the Federation, but it also marked the point of departure from which Africans could safely assume that Britain acted in African interests. As Hastings Banda, the future leader of the Africans of Nyasaland told Dr Donal Brody in interview,

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<sup>105</sup> Darwin, J., 'British decolonization since 1945: A pattern or a puzzle?', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12, 2, (1984), p 190.

I could not believe that almost one hundred years of promises of eventual self-determination were broken by a cabal of selfish individuals seeking to exploit the very Africans they had, almost a century ago, pledged to protect. I would not take this lying down. I spoke to influential people and groups all over Britain, but the tide had indeed turned against us. That is not to say that I gave up. No! Not at all. I continued to press the government in every forum I had available to me. I was determined to be the thorn in the side of the British in London and in the side of the settler government in Salisbury.<sup>106</sup>

From this juncture, both Congresses realised that their policies and their claim to represent African opinion in general needed to change if it was to exert any meaningful influence over British policy. Such hostility contributed to making British aims unworkable. As will be explored in the following chapters, when the Federation was inaugurated, Africans believed that calls for greater representation would simply result in further entrenchment of white settler supremacy. During these crucial years, Africans laid the foundations for a movement that was later to win independence from Britain. Africans had gained valuable organisational experience and had committed themselves to a truly national cause. Rather than subdue African nationalism, therefore, Africans in the North thus came to interpret Federation as an insuperable barrier to their own ambitions for national self-determination and its imposition gave African nationalism in the region its decisive, early, boost. As N.D. Kwenje told Hastings Banda in 1952,

The Federation question has done a great deed for us Africans. It has united us far more closely than any other question would have accomplished.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Dr Hastings Banda interview with Dr Donal Brody, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7693584/Dr-Banda-Biography1> [accessed 14/12/2010].

<sup>107</sup> RH, AB 240/2, N.D. Kwenje, President of the Salisbury branch of Nyasaland African Congress to Dr Hastings Banda, undated, 1952.

# 2

## *The African Response to Federation: African 'National' Protest and the Congress Parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1953-1958*

The period 1953-1958 was a critical phase in the short history of the Federation during which the African National Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland emerged from relative obscurity to champion the anti-federation cause. Whilst these developments failed to yield significant political gains for Africans, British colonial officials and the settler press were forced to admit that African nationalism was a growing and potentially dangerous force in Central African politics. By 1958, the European-owned *Northern News* ruefully concluded that African nationalism was a phenomenon of major importance, one that would become a permanent feature of political life in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>1</sup>

What is perhaps most surprising is the relative lack of historiographical scrutiny, especially in the early post-independence literature, on the manner in which this transformation in African politics occurred. Indeed, whilst historians such as Robert Rotberg, L.H. Gann and David Mulford could comment upon the growth

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<sup>1</sup> *Northern News*, 31 Dec., 1957.

of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, they could not explain its emergence.<sup>2</sup> Accounts that emerged in the immediate post-independence period, therefore, tended to place undue emphasis on the extent to which the Federation – or more specifically the *imposition* of the Federation – provided an incentive for the African elite to mobilise the masses against the colonial state. Implicit in these studies was the view that African nationalism was ostensibly reactionary in character, that without the external stimulus given to African politicians by the anti-Federation debate it was highly unlikely that African nationalism would have emerged in the near future. African nationalism was thus seen to have developed in response to external factors that impacted unfavourably on the small cohort of ‘elite’ Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, who, in turn, sought to defy the Federation by winning the hearts and minds of the Africans masses which could then be used to win for Africans greater socio-economic and constitutional rights.

This chapter will confirm and extend these conclusions. Federation *did* provide a catalyst for African politicisation and the initiative for mobilisation against the Federation *did* come from the African elite. But such views are not entirely sufficient to explain *how* political sentiment spread within African communities and *how* the Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were able to bring together Africans at the grass roots in a united, ‘national’, protest against Federation. Recent studies, such as those by Joey Power and Owen Kalinga, have provided a valuable corrective to this anomaly. As they demonstrate in regards to Nyasaland, for example, peasant agitation for political change in the localities was equally as important in nurturing anti-Federation sentiment as the campaign waged

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<sup>2</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia*, Mulford, *Zambia*.

by the African elite at the high political level. Protesting against local grievances, such as discriminatory state agricultural legislation, the peasants gave an impetus and focus for the African elite who were then able to link them together and incorporate them into a wider, national, struggle.<sup>3</sup> Whilst African protest over local issues allowed for the articulation of 'local' grievances, therefore, it was the educated elite that gave them national relevance, manipulating local discontent and diverting its flow into constructive, more overtly political, channels. This chapter will extend these ideas with a view to suggesting *how* this process occurred. Just how did African political leaders mobilise grass roots support? Moreover, how were the Congresses able to provide Africans with an 'experience of the state' and, crucially, how were African leaders able to turn African politicisation into genuine African nationalism?

### *The Growth of African Nationalism and the Politics of Federation: 1953-58*

In the words of Peter Fraenkel, a broadcaster and close friend of Rhodes Livingstone Institute anthropologists working in Central Africa during the 1950s, Africans did not settle down happily under Federation despite the confident predictions of British politicians. 'The tensions and the hatreds of the land did not diminish. They grew worse every day'.<sup>4</sup> In their desire to ease the multitude of pressures in the region, the Conservative government had not confronted the crucial problem of racial equality in Central Africa. This was seen initially in the

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<sup>3</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*. Kalinga, 'Résistance, Politics of Protest, and Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi', pp. 443-454.

<sup>4</sup> Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, p.218.



failure to calibrate the powers of each territory, which subsequently ensured that in key policy areas, such as native policy, the entire Federation became subject to the will of its more influential settler cohort. This not only led to a regression in African advancement policy but also created resentment and bitterness that jeopardised long-term multi-racial cooperation. Nyasaland, for example, had a much higher number of 'educated' Africans and thus had greater opportunity for advancement than Africans in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, yet, under the terms of the Federal constitution, African progress was likely to be stifled by settlers in the Rhodesias who feared that Africans in their own territories would demand equal opportunities.<sup>5</sup> With only seven members in the Federal Parliament compared to 17 members from Southern Rhodesia and 11 members from Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland's interests would constantly be subject to the will of its more influential Federal neighbours and, as Governor Geoffrey Colby warned Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttelton, the future of the Protectorate would 'largely rest in the hands of the European elected members of the Rhodesias'.<sup>6</sup>

Progress towards partnership in the period after the Federation's formation had thus been slow. In a brief prepared for new Colonial Secretary Alan Lennox-Boyd before his visit to Central Africa in 1957, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office William Gorell Barnes surmised that the British and Federal governments had failed to win Africans over to the idea of Federation. Even in the socio-economic sphere, he said, 'segregation and discrimination' remains a

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<sup>5</sup> Henderson, I., 'The Origins of Nationalism in East and Central Africa: The Zambian Case' *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 11, No. 4. (1970), p.594.

<sup>6</sup> NA, CO 1015/1583, letter from Colby to Lyttelton, 19 March 1952.

prevalent feature of life in the northern territories'.<sup>7</sup> Africans continued to use separate entrances for post offices and share separate facilities in hospitals, hotels and on the railways, whilst the industrial colour bar, meanwhile, continued to prevent Africans competing with whites for jobs. These features of life in the Federation served only to crystallise African fears that it was a construct intended to preserve settler ascendancy. As Kenneth Kaunda, General Secretary of the African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia [ANC] told his friend Thomas Fox-Pitt of the Anti-Slavery Society in Britain, a man whom he had met during the latter's time as a colonial official in Kitwe on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt, the situation appeared ominous. 'Democracy and equality is being suffocated by Federation', he said. 'Racial strife has only been shelved and if progress is not made soon serious trouble lies ahead'.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of 1956, constitutional issues, both territorial and Federal, loomed large on the horizon. For the Federal government, the immediate objective was for the Federation to become an independent member of the Commonwealth as soon as possible. As Prime Minister Godfrey Huggins, by then Lord Malvern after the granting of a peerage in 1956, observed, not only would this hand his government greater autonomy from the Colonial Office, but it would also help stave off calls for African self-government, providing the African majority with an incentive to work towards implementation of multiracial partnership.<sup>9</sup> The request

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<sup>7</sup> NA, CO 1015/65, minute by Gorell Barnes, 12 Apr., 1957.

<sup>8</sup> S[chool] of O[riental] and A[African] S[tudies], London, Thomas F[ox]-P[it]t P[apers] Box 13, PPMS 6/7/2, Kaunda Press Communiqué, 13 Oct., 1954.

<sup>9</sup> RH, AB Box 102/2, Dixon Konkola to Lady Selwyn Clarke, 4 Jun., 1957. Writing to Lady Selwyn Clarke, Konkola remarked that John Roberts, the leader of the European unofficials in the Federal Assembly had said that he 'hated interference by the Commons in local affairs in dealing with Africans in Northern Rhodesia'.

for prospective Commonwealth status was initially made to the British on 12 March 1956, much to the chagrin of Northern Rhodesia's Governor, Arthur Benson, and the new Governor of Nyasaland, Sir Robert Armitage, who regarded the move as a prelude to amalgamation.<sup>10</sup>

In what has long been interpreted as an attempt to placate the settlers and delay an immediate decision on the future of Central Africa, the Colonial and Commonwealth Relations Offices issued a joint communiqué in April 1957 handing the Federal Government greater control over the Federation's external affairs. The communiqué also guaranteed that the British would not amend or repeal any Federal Act except at the request of Federal authorities and brought forward the Federal Review Conference to 1960 where the future of the Federation as a full member of the Commonwealth would be considered.<sup>11</sup> To the untrained eye, this might have appeared like the promise of independence shortly after 1960. It also appeared to contradict earlier commitments by the British government that protectorate status would not be withdrawn from the northern territories without the consent of their inhabitants. The implementation of the 1957 Constitutional Amendment Act and the 1958 Federal Electoral Act shortly thereafter, in spite of opposition from the African Affairs Board which was subsequently bypassed, confirmed long-held African suspicions that British and Federal governments were

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<sup>10</sup> RH, W[elensky] P[apers], Papers of the Rt. Hon. Sir Roy Welensky, Prime Minister of the Central African Federation 1957-64, Box 20/1, Malvern to Lord Home, 12 Mar., 1956. See also NA, CO 1015/1129, Benson to Lennox-Boyd, 6 Jun., 1956.

<sup>11</sup> RH, AB 107/2, Joint Announcement by the Governments of the UK and of the Federation, 27 Apr., 1957.

unlikely to promote African advancement until white settler interests had been safeguarded.<sup>12</sup>

The former Act provided for the enlargement of the Federal Assembly from 35 to 59 seats. In the old Assembly there were 26 'ordinary' members (European), three European members representing African interests, six specially elected Africans and an additional six Africans who would be directly elected by both electoral rolls. Hence, although the number of members representing Africans would increase, the increase would come in the form of six members who might well be chosen by a European electorate. The Federal Electoral Act provided for the creation of 'ordinary' and 'special' electoral rolls. Property and literacy qualifications would ensure that the former would be predominantly European and the latter African. British Protected Persons would be able to register to vote, although the minimum qualification of £150 per annum plus literacy for the 'special' roll promised to exclude the majority of Africans. What small faith Africans had retained in the capacity of the British government to secure their interests after the formation of the Federation had been shattered. As Stewart Gore-Browne, a former Member of the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council and close friend of ANC President Harry Nkumbula and his deputy, Kenneth Kaunda, commented to the left-wing British newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, Africans now believed that unless drastic action was forthcoming in the next months, Central Africa's whites would inevitably achieve their goal of dominion status in 1960.<sup>13</sup>

The disappointment shared among Africans and their supporters came to the fore in Northern Rhodesia during the discussions over what was to be known as

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<sup>12</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa: Part I: Closer Association 1945-1958', p.lxvi.

<sup>13</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 6 Feb., 1956.

the Benson Constitution in 1958. Under the new provisions, which were published in a White Paper in March, 22 members would be elected, 14 of which would be European and eight African.<sup>14</sup> In addition there would be six official and two nominated members. Behind these bare details of racial representation lay a hugely complicated system of cross-racial voting.<sup>15</sup> Whilst Federal Prime Minister Sir Roy Welensky complained that the increase in African representation was a 'betrayal' of multi-racial partnership, the Northern Rhodesian Congress complained that the measures did not go far enough.<sup>16</sup> In January 1958, ANC leaders wrote to Benson demanding that the only solution to satisfy the political aspirations of the majority would be universal adult franchise under the premise of one man, one vote'. 'Taking into consideration the relative populations of the two races', ANC President Nkumbula said, 'what could be more moderate and civilised?'<sup>17</sup> Once again, African objections were ignored and their hopes for partnership frustrated. On 4 July, having failed to gain a sympathetic ear in the Colonial Office, the ANC publicly burned copies of the White Paper. The symbolic act represented the final departure for Africans from any notion or vague hope that the Colonial Office would come to their rescue. Settlers, too, also found their efforts to extract concessions frustrated.

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<sup>14</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa', p.lxvii. The Legislative Council would be enlarged to 30 members plus a speaker.

<sup>15</sup> Twelve of the 14 seats expected to go to Europeans would not be specifically racially reserved but would be elected from 'ordinary' constituencies, formed largely from the principal areas of European settlement. Likewise, six of the eight seats expected to go to Africans would be elected from 'special', largely rural constituencies. There would also be two specifically European representatives elected from 'special' constituencies and two specifically African representatives elected from 'ordinary' constituencies, an arrangement designed to provide representation for rural Europeans and urban Africans. The franchise would follow the federal model, with a lower set of qualifications for the 'special' vote. 'Special' votes cast in ordinary constituencies would not count for more than a third of the total. The same was true for 'ordinary' votes in special constituencies or in elections for the two reserved African members.

<sup>16</sup> Welensky, R., *Welensky's 4000 Days: The Life and Death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1964), p. 89.

<sup>17</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 14, PPMS 6/7/4, African National Congress to Benson, 23 Jan., 1958.

On 19 December, following a question in Parliament from the Labour Party, Lennox-Boyd re-stated the government's commitment to the White Paper. With the British finding their policy solutions unacceptable to either race in Central Africa, and with both Africans and settlers growing increasingly suspicious of each other, the prospects for Federation were bleak. The seeds had truly been sown for a crisis that would sound the death knell for Federation.

### *Nyasaland African Congress Mobilisation, 1953-58*

The development of nationalism in Nyasaland can be divided into two distinct phases. The period 1953-56 has been characterised by scholars as a 'desperate' phase for the NAC.<sup>18</sup> As shown in the previous chapter, the onset of Federation and subsequent decline in Congress membership to under 1000 created among African political leaders in Nyasaland a sense that support for political goals had to come from 'grass roots'.<sup>19</sup> 'Federation came', wrote Leonard Chirwa to the Secretary General of the NAC, 'not because we wanted it but because our opposition was weak. If the Congress is to become strong once more we must take the message to the people of this country'.<sup>20</sup> It was not until 1955, after the emergence of a new generation of more militant African political activists, that national politics were extended beyond conferences, delegations and petitions, and a more concerted effort was made to unite the radical and moderate factions of the NAC, plagued by disagreements pertaining to NAC representation in government since 1953. If the

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<sup>18</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.13.

<sup>19</sup> NA, CO 1035/137, Armitage to Lennox-Boyd, 'Memorandum on Nyasaland African Congress Activities', 11 Jul., 1956.

<sup>20</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 3/20, Y.M. Leonard Chirwa and M.B. Phili to the Secretary-General, Nyasaland African Congress, 19 Mar., 1954.

NAC were to make significant progress in their attempts to win equal rights for Africans, politics had to be firmly rooted in the localities. In the opinion of the NAC's new leaders, the Nyasaland government had to be made aware that Congress was not an organisation of educated clerks, but a movement representing *all* Africans.

The NAC's popular mobilisation campaign in rural areas centred upon the party's ability to exploit rising discontent with colonial conservation policies. In Nyasaland, as in other regions in east and southern Africa, the determination of British and colonial authorities to increase agricultural productivity while coping with a perceived crisis of accelerating soil erosion was a key factor in explaining the intensification of state intervention in the agricultural sphere after the Second World War.<sup>21</sup> Of great concern among landowners and settlers was that Africans, through lack of training, held an irresponsible attitude towards natural resources. To hand Africans sole responsibility over agricultural affairs would lead, in years to come, to ruination of soil and to the decimation of Nyasaland's agricultural industry.<sup>22</sup> In the early 1950s, under pressure from the settler dominated Agriculture Department, the Nyasaland government implemented a series of measures intended to conserve farming land and prevent soil erosion. In the Northern Province, the most popular and arguably most successful conservation methods evolved from the Misuku Land Usage Scheme of 1938. This involved, among other proposals, prohibiting peasants from growing crops such as millet unless under strict supervision and restricting cattle to designated grazing zones by

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<sup>21</sup> McCracken, 'Conservation and resistance in Colonial Malawi: the 'Dead North' Revisited', p.50.

<sup>22</sup> Baker, C., *Seeds of trouble: government policy and land rights in Nyasaland, 1946-1964* (London, 1993), p.116.

constructing contour ridges and bunds.<sup>23</sup> In the Southern Province, schemes for soil conservation were closely associated with the introduction of ambitious land settlement programmes involving the forced movements of thousands of Africans.

The enforcement of such policies served to intensify African suspicions of the state. As Griff Jones, District Commissioner in the Nkhata Bay area remarked in his diary, post-war agricultural legislation was hugely unpopular. People frequently complained that the rules were inadequate and showed a lack of understanding on behalf of the Nyasaland government to some of the issues faced by African farmers. Villagers were 'insistent', for instance, that the enforcement of contour ridging was misguided since cassava would 'rot if grown on ridges'.<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere there were complaints concerning the excessive labour involved in digging bunds, the loss of fertile land, and above all, the fear that bunding (land enclosure) would serve as a prelude for European settlement in the area.

Tension was heightened in the early 1950s by the implementation of the controversial Master Farmers' Scheme, intended to increase African food production by encouraging yeoman farmers to enclose and farm their own land.<sup>25</sup> To ensure that the envisaged 'yeoman farmer' really emerged, the Master Farmers' Scheme was to be given a boost by the introduction of bonus payments for those

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<sup>23</sup> McCracken, J., 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism: Flax Musopole and the Northern Factor in Malawian Politics, c.1956-1966', *Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Special Issue: Malawi (Mar., 2002), p.73. Growing millet was discouraged owing to its destructive effect on indigenous woodlands.

<sup>24</sup> RH, Mss. Afr.V.123, Griff Jones, *Ulendo Diary, 1952-53*, 8 Jun., 1953.

<sup>25</sup> Kalinga, O.J.M., 'The Master Farmers' Scheme in Nyasaland, 1950-1962: A Study of a Failed Attempt to Create a 'Yeoman' Class', *African Affairs* (1993), 92, p.369. As Kalinga suggests, the usual practice, before the famine of 1949 had revealed its inefficiency, was to allow African villages to collectively farm the land belonging to the village. Crucially, the issue of land requisition was also a prevalent feature in Nyasaland at this time. The Master Farmers' Scheme was part of a much larger attempt by the Nyasaland Government to reclaim, and then privatise, land from Africans in order to accelerate and increase production.



who were to 'farm their land in conformity with prescribed conditions'.<sup>26</sup> The scheme itself became particularly contentious in the late 1950s. Surveys carried out in 1955 and 1956 indicated that the scheme was not proving entirely profitable for farmers and consequently their commitment to the scheme began to lapse. This in turn provoked the state to pass legislation which enabled agricultural officials to prosecute members, and indeed non-members, of the scheme not following what officials at the department of agriculture considered to be proper practices. People came to be prosecuted for bunding offences, for not clearing their gardens early and even for poor crop spacing and late weeding. Offenders were routinely summoned to their chiefs' court where almost invariably a fine was imposed. In the 1956 season, 8,107 people in the Southern Province were prosecuted and over 230 farming offences committed in the North.<sup>27</sup> Naturally, the prosecutions and the accompanying increase in fines were deeply resented by farmers and peasants in general.

Before 1953, African opposition to state intervention was uncoordinated, largely passive and generally disconnected with Congress political activities. Resistance often took the form of open disregard for agricultural rules, much to the chagrin of agricultural officers employed to enforce them. In the Northern Province, where there existed only a handful of police, local authorities lacked both the will and initiative to clamp down upon non-cooperation. Perhaps more disturbing, however, was that the Native Authorities upon whom the government relied to enforce state agricultural policies began to lend support to the protesters. By the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* p.369. The bonus payments were viewed not only as an incentive to good agriculture but also as compensation for accepting the rotation system which involved resting a portion of their cropland at regular intervals.

<sup>27</sup> Kalinga, 'The Master Farmers' Scheme in Nyasaland', p.380.

late 1950s, agricultural reports referred to often low-level fines imposed upon offenders. In regions where local resistance was high, Congress activists found fertile ground with which they could stir African emotions and link local discontent with the discriminatory racial policies of the Nyasaland and Federal governments. As the Governor reported to Lennox-Boyd, the issue of land alienation in particular was one that resonated deeply with Africans.

The ordinary villager, dependent either on agriculture or on manual labour for his living, lies at the potential force behind Congress and its real danger ... He is prevented from seeing the true benefits of Federation by the policy of Congress in constantly stimulating his fears on any subject likely to cause him apprehension. Typical and recent examples of such subjects have been the proposals to federalise non-African agriculture and alterations to the Federal Constitution, all of which are represented by Congress as steps specifically devised to interfere with his land or his liberty.<sup>28</sup>

Before long, Congress came to appreciate the political capital that could be made from the prevailing tension, taking active steps to exploit sources of tension within the localities. In 1956, for example, Congress encouraged farmers to openly resist agricultural rules by not paying rent and ignoring restrictions imposed upon them by the farming scheme. Since the scheme impacted upon Africans throughout the territory, Congress was easily able to create widespread protest uniting Africans against state oppression. The effect was that soon, many farmers became active politicians in their areas, coordinating local resistance and mobilising Africans to the Congress cause. This was especially apparent in the Karonga District of the Northern Province, in which members of several cooperative unions operating in the region became key political figures in the local community. As manager of the Kilipula Rice Growers Cooperative Union, formed to assist rice growers in the production and marketing of their crops, for example, Robert Gwebe-Nyirenda played a key role in

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<sup>28</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Armitage to Lennox-Boyd, 4 Oct., 1957.

disseminating Congress literature in the localities in which the KPGCU operated, publicising and holding NAC meetings throughout the region.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1950s NAC mobilisation was undoubtedly more impressive in the countryside; this is not to suggest, however that Congress was not operating in urban regions. Given that the party was formed in one of Nyasaland's fastest growing centres, Blantyre, in 1943, NAC leaders were acutely aware that they could not afford to neglect Nyasaland's urban population. Unsurprisingly, the NAC's urban campaign differed little from the party's approach in rural regions. Politicising Africans in and around Nyasaland's colonial towns also meant engaging with African responses to threats to their homes and livelihoods, equating these struggles with the fight against land grubbing and the colour bar. The campaign grew by forging bonds with, and working through, local voluntary organisations, workers' organisations, women's schools, youth groups and chiefly authorities, all of them threatened by state-imposed changes to urban space.

One of the first targets for the NAC was the Town and Country Planning Ordinance, launched by the Nyasaland government in 1951, which proposed the effective segregation of Limbe and Blantyre into high, medium and low density residential zones. In conjunction with proposals to establish commercial and light industrial zones in the very areas where the majority of Africans had their homes and business premises, the Ordinance re-designated African Trust Land to be allocated to white business people with substantial investment capital 'far

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<sup>29</sup> Kalinga, O.J.M., 'The 1959 Nyasaland State of Emergency in Old Karonga District', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol., 36, No., 4, (December 2010), p.249.

exceeding that available to the average African entrepreneur'.<sup>30</sup> Enforcement of the new plan in the early 1950s involved the movement of Africans to comply with new zoning regulations. Despite attempts to defy regulations, by 1952 some 6,000 people had been removed from areas affected by the scheme. In spite of their failure to prevent African displacement, Congress members operating in the region, such as Grant Mikeka Mkandawire, who became chairman of the influential Blantyre branch in August 1952, had linked the issue closely with Federation. If Africans were moved once, he told NAC supporters, they would almost certainly be moved again once they had developed an area sufficiently for Europeans to move in and reap the benefit from their labours.<sup>31</sup> This was an issue of racial discrimination, a sign of things to come under Federation.

The NAC's urban mobilisation campaign achieved its most notable success in February 1955, when Congress members in the Soche area of Blantyre opposed local administration plans to transform all remaining African Trust Land into public land.<sup>32</sup> The memo written to the government by prominent Soche citizens and, later supported by the NAC, protested against forced removals and noted that most of the land that had been cleared was still undeveloped. While the government iterated that their policy would not be reversed, it suspended removals from the disputed areas for several years. This was in many respects an isolated victory, with evictions continuing elsewhere in urban centres until 1959, but it proved to be hugely important in building NAC prestige in Blantyre from which the party's

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<sup>30</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.82. Power contends that commercial leaseholds required a minimum capital investment of £10,000 and payment of an annual rent of £30.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.83.

<sup>32</sup> This was not altogether surprising given that a majority of Africans living in the 'peri-urban' villages around Blantyre and Limbe tended to retain access to land on which many women worked and cultivated. See McCracken J., 'Blantyre Transformed', p.252.

influential Blantyre branch could begin to make a concerted attempt to harness the support of Africans elsewhere.

Targeting forced removals was just one way in which the Congress sought to exploit economic and physical hardships experienced by Africans. The downturn in the economy from 1957 provided the NAC with a further opportunity to harness popular discontent, rallying against growing unemployment and rising living costs. As both Power and John McCracken have demonstrated, the position of Nyasaland's labourers, although poor, was generally favourable throughout the 1950s and consequently, there existed little incentive for worker militancy.<sup>33</sup> Whilst wages were pitifully low, Europeans earning up to 20 times the wage of Africans, the rise in minimum daily wages in towns such as Blantyre from 10d in 1952, to 16d in 1955, 24d in 1957 and 30d in 1959 almost certainly involved a real increase in living standards for workers.<sup>34</sup> Economic problems experienced by all after 1957 fundamentally altered the African predicament, giving rise to circumstances that made easier attempts to attribute poor standards in African living to the Federation. By suggesting that low wages paid to Africans were a product of racial discrimination, and by linking African impoverishment with Nyasaland's membership of the Federation, which was argued to by the Congress to have consumed Nyasaland's natural resources, the NAC had begun to successfully make the connection between local politics and the fight against *chitaganya*.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> In 1957 there were only 1500 organised workers in the territory, many of whom, Power suggests, were generally accepting of petty capitalists and labour leaders, in part a corollary of the influence of wealthy African employers such as Lawrence Makata, who performed an important social welfare function in an environment of profound insecurity and thus harnessed the absolute loyalty of the African workforce under their employment. Makata, for instance, took personal responsibility for housing and feeding labour forces.

<sup>34</sup> McCracken, 'Blantyre Transformed', p.262.

<sup>35</sup> This was the local term for Federation.

Tony Woods is right to suggest that the implications of this policy, especially in regards to the politicisation of Nyasaland's trade union movement, were to be felt more profoundly after 1958, when for the first time in the country's history crowds of young marginalised men came out on Blantyre's streets in defiant demonstrations in support of Congress.<sup>36</sup> It is important, nonetheless, to recognise that the attempt to harness the powerful political force of organised labour was rooted in the NAC's urban campaign at this time. Indeed, there existed strong connections between Congress and trade unions. Several labour leaders in Blantyre, such as Lawrence Makata and Lali Lubani, Chairman of the African Motor Transport Workers Union, for instance, were active members of the local Congress branch as well as founding members of the African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and although their own interests as employers of Africans perhaps meant that labour politicisation was not wholly in their own interests, they provided them with a distinct political veneer. This is not to say that Congress was not above capitalising on workers' grievances for its own ends. In 1956, for example, the labour commissioner in Blantyre suspected that Congress leaders in the AMTWU had been responsible for the rejection of a wages and benefit package put forward by the Nyasaland Transport Company following a pay dispute over the amount skilled African workers were receiving in comparison to whites.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Woods, T., "Bread with Freedom and Peace...': Rail Workers in Malawi, 1954-1975', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Dec., 1992), pp.727-738.

<sup>37</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.92.

### ***The Decisive Push for National Unity: The Nyasaland African Congress 1957-1958***

By 1957, in spite of initial problems caused by divisions in Congress that rose to the surface after 1953, Africans in Nyasaland were beginning to rally behind a national cause. Writing in *New Commonwealth*, historian Richard Gray stated,

The love and loyalty shown by Africans in Nyasaland to their territory is unique in Africa ... Elsewhere, in the Gold Coast, Uganda, the Sudan and Nigeria, tribal and local loyalties seriously threaten the emergence and stability of new national states. In Nyasaland they do not. Nationalism has united Congress and Chiefs, Muslim and Christian, lake-shore and highlands. Three years of Federation have done little to diminish this.<sup>38</sup>

With a focussed and united leadership, brought together by the decision of prominent NAC members Henry Masauko Chipembere and Kanyama Chiume to walk out of the Legislative Council in protest against the Federal Constitution Amendment Bill being introduced in the Assembly in June 1957, a clear lead was given to Congress members.<sup>39</sup> But the cultivation of unity also owed as much to circumstance as political activism. Nyasaland was a comparatively small nation with an economy based predominantly on agriculture. The NAC was therefore able to mount a broadly homogenous anti-government campaign based on state intervention in the agricultural sphere. This not only ensured that there existed little regional differentiation in the overall nature of African nationalism, but also that a genuine sense of African commitment to the Congress' 'national' agenda was able to be fostered. As Chipembere wrote in 1957, commitment to a single nationalist programme was essential in the pre-independence period. Diversification and 'party politics', he wrote, were a 'dangerous thing during pre-

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<sup>38</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Extract from *New Commonwealth*, Gray, R., 'African Nationalism in Nyasaland', 7 Jan., 1957.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Jun., 1957. See Power, J., 'Building Relevance: The Blantyre Congress, 1953-1956', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Special Issue: Malawi (Mar., 2002) p.46.

liberation views'. What was needed at this stage was 'one solid powerful mass movement embracing all people'.<sup>40</sup>

In spite of the NAC's progress, the party had still to make a significant impact upon Nyasaland politics. The most important development in this respect was the decision to invite Hastings Banda to return from Ghana to lead the NAC in their struggle. Banda was not an unknown entity to the NAC. Together with Harry Nkumbula, the future leader of the Northern Rhodesian Congress, Banda made the first significant *African* intervention in the anti-Federation debate by publishing a point-by-point rebuttal of the arguments in favour of federation in the form of a memorandum to the Colonial Office in 1949. The document declared that a form of federation would not be in the best interests of the peoples of Central Africa because such a plan would extend to the two protectorates the policy of segregation and discrimination under which their fellow Africans in Southern Rhodesia had suffered. It was the 'thin end of the wedge of amalgamation', the memo argued, 'coated with the sugar of federation to make it easier for the Africans and the Imperial Government to swallow'.<sup>41</sup> It was rumoured in 1951 that Banda would return to Nyasaland, but he instead chose to move from his London home to the Gold Coast, where he continued to practice medicine. For Chipembere, Chiume and Dunduza Chisiza, a rising star in African politics, Banda was a man who already held a prominent place in Nyasaland's history. He was thus perfectly placed

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<sup>40</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Henry Chipembere, 'A Letter to the African People of the Nyasaland Protectorate', May 1957.

<sup>41</sup> Banda's quote is taken from Banda, HK., and Nkumbula, H., 'Federation in Central Africa', 1 May, 1949, an extract of which is included in Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.224.



to lead the NAC at this critical juncture.<sup>42</sup> Upon being persuaded to return in July 1958, Banda provided the anti-colonial struggle with renewed impetus. In August he was elected President of the party without dissent. During the year, he toured the Protectorate, emotionally denouncing the Federation and exhorting Africans to swell the membership rolls of Congress. 'If we are organised and united, from Karonga to Port Herald, or from Port Herald to Karonga', he said, 'nothing will or can ever stop us from achieving our aim or reaching our goal'.<sup>43</sup> He was ably assisted in his task by Congress' allies in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, who played an essential, if indirect, role in facilitating the rapid politicisation of the people in key locations around Blantyre and Lilongwe.<sup>44</sup>

Having been reluctant to take a leading role in political issues, the joint declaration issued by the CCAP missions in March 1958, which condemned the Federation and advocated Nyasaland's secession, marked a decisive turning point.<sup>45</sup> Whilst the CCAP refrained from taking a leading role in African politics, believing that change would only occur if Africans themselves assumed the initiative, the missions provided an important support base for Congress members, not least because the Nyasaland police were 'unable to put a set of ears in every congregation'.<sup>46</sup> The CCAP alone had a protectorate-wide membership of some 150,000, and church services became an important means by which Congress members could address, or influence, large groups without police permits and to

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<sup>42</sup> Forster, G., 'Culture, Nationalism, and the Invention of Tradition in Malawi', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Sept., 1994), p.488.

<sup>43</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Feb., 1958.

<sup>44</sup> Stuart, J., *British Missionaries and the End of Empire, East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939-64*, (Cambridge, 2011), pp.106-112.

<sup>45</sup> RH, WP 247/4, Statement of the Synod of Blantyre of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, undated, 1958.

<sup>46</sup> McCracken, J., 'Coercion and Control in Nyasaland: Aspects of the History of a Colonial Police Force', *Journal of African History*, 27, No. 1 (1986) pp.130-141.

ensure that political messages reached those who did not usually attend political gatherings.<sup>47</sup> As Joey Power claims, some CCAP ministers, like Reverend Makwakwa of Nkhata Bay and Isaac Chirwa in Central Province, openly expressed political sentiment from the pulpit, condemned state injustices and helped to 'spread the word' by virtue of the geography of their ministries. Ministers with political leanings like Makwakwa travelled around very large parishes and as a result acted as a conduit for information, cards and funds.<sup>48</sup>

The prominence to which Banda had been elevated, and the constant reassertion that self-government was just over the horizon, added a great stimulus to the NAC's political activities in 1958. In his protectorate-wide tour, upon which he embarked soon after his arrival, Dr Banda spoke passionately about 'bringing politics down to earth ... to talk politics in terms of every day life'.<sup>49</sup> Everywhere he rallied against 'local' grievances, tying together the Congress demand for a new Constitution with prices of farm products and the enforcement of agricultural rules. 'I have the whole of Zomba and Blantyre on fire', claimed Banda, 'and soon I hope this to spread throughout Nyasaland'.<sup>50</sup> He was not to be disappointed. In September, Africans in the Fort Johnston district stepped up opposition to the enforcement of a range of agricultural rules after Banda had noted their complaints in a speech. Later in the month, unrest broke out after Banda addressed a large meeting in Zomba. Automobiles belonging to Europeans and Asians were stoned

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<sup>47</sup> RH, WP 247/4, FISB Paper, 'Attitude of the Church of Scotland towards Federation', 13 Apr., 1959.

<sup>48</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.115.

<sup>49</sup> M[alawi] N[ational] A[rchives], Zomba, SMP 14006II, Annual Report on NAs 1955-59, 16-2-2R, 2829, Annual Report on Native Administration, 1958, Southern Province, E.A. Lewis, Provincial Commissioner, 14 Jan., 1959.

<sup>50</sup> Banda quoted in Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.288.

and caused the *Nyasaland Times* to claim that the demonstration of hooliganism was akin to 'mob rule' which was beginning to 'pervade the territory'.<sup>51</sup>

A poignant symbol of the NAC's growing following was the extent to which NAC rhetoric was gaining ground among women and the youth, groups previously excluded from national politics.<sup>52</sup> Politicisation of Nyasaland's women owed much to the efforts of Rose Chibambo, who played a key role in developing a political programme that appealed specifically to women. She spoke vociferously against the colour bar and connected the grievances of agriculturalists in the Southern Province with discrimination against Nyasaland's women. Labour migration and land alienation affected women as much as men; as mothers, it was they who suffered most from being removed from their rural homes. Upon being transferred with her husband from Zomba to Blantyre in 1953, Chibambo became treasurer of the NAC Blantyre branch, the first woman to hold an executive position in the party. Her presence as a member and officeholder attracted more women to branch meetings, raising the party's profile. By 1956, Blantyre had a significant women's contingent and in September 1958, Banda instructed Chibambo to form the Women's League, which soon became a key presence at political meetings and at NAC demonstrations.<sup>53</sup>

The NAC was equally successful in mobilising the youth, and this came to be reflected in the frequent instances of unrest that took place in all three senior

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<sup>51</sup> *Nyasaland Times*, Oct., 1958.

<sup>52</sup> See Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.108-110.

<sup>53</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Political Intelligence Report, Jan., 1959. Women played an important role, for instance, in meetings at which Banda spoke, dancing and singing for their leader.

secondary schools in the Protectorate.<sup>54</sup> Blantyre Secondary School, for instance, was closed for two weeks in October 1958 after a number of girls were expelled for singing an anti-Federation song at a school assembly.<sup>55</sup> Similar events unfolded at Central Province schools. In Dedza, students objected to the appointment of a Chichewa language teacher whom Congress had identified as a Special Branch mole. Students were reported to have uttered death threats against the teacher and his family and, subsequently, the school was closed and its students transported home singing 'Kwaca! Kwaca! Hallelujah!' from the back of trucks.<sup>56</sup>

As the Nyasaland Intelligence Committee perceived the situation, developments since Banda's return had changed the pattern of African resistance,

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that African opinion will from now onwards exercise an increasing influence on political, constitutional, economic and social development in Nyasaland ... Africans, led by militant nationalist leaders working on and stimulating the existing rooted distrust by the ordinary villager of the Southern Rhodesian impact on his life in Nyasaland and impelled by an emotionalism which overrides all economic considerations, could make effective government of the country extremely difficult.<sup>57</sup>

Hastings Banda's impact upon nationalist politics was profound, and lasting. In his own words, he had been a 'revelation' to the people.<sup>58</sup> From only 1,000 paid-up members in April 1956, over 13,000 had registered with Congress branches by October 1957, increasing to over 20,000 by September 1958.<sup>59</sup> Mobilisation in the Northern Province was particularly impressive. In 1956, registered NAC branches

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<sup>54</sup> These were, Blantyre Secondary School, Zomba Catholic Secondary School, Dedza Secondary School, Mzuzu Secondary School, and one teacher training institute at Domasi.

<sup>55</sup> NA, CO 1015/1831, Legislative Council Report, 24 Dec., 1958.

<sup>56</sup> See RH, D[evlin] C[omission] P[apers], Papers of the Commission of Inquiry into the Nyasaland Emergency, Box 7, NYC 16, Principal of Dedza School to Director of Education, Zomba, 7 Oct., 1958.

<sup>57</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Oct., 1958.

<sup>58</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 8, PPMS 6/6/1, Banda to Fox-Pitt, 3 Sept., 1958.

<sup>59</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Extract from Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Nov., 1958. The swell in Congress membership was reflected in the dramatic increase of Congress branches registered. Whilst NAC branches in late 1956 stood at 18, by 1958 they had reached 83.

numbered only seven from a total of 18. By October 1958, no less than 48 out of 63 branches were located in the region.<sup>60</sup> Banda's return to Nyasaland not only served to unite the NAC, providing a charismatic figurehead around which moderate and radical factions of the party could unite, but his presence also served to excite nationalists elsewhere. Banda's most important role in this capacity was the stimulus he gave to the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress. On 21 December Banda addressed an ANC meeting denouncing moderates and expressing his hope that Africans in the territory were not 'like pigs that just wanted to eat and go to bed when their stomachs were full'.<sup>61</sup> Nothing, Terrence Ranger suggested, had been heard in Southern Rhodesia like this before. As the *Central African Examiner* reported in January 1959, Banda's visit heralded a 'new chapter' in African politics in the territory.<sup>62</sup>

By 1958, the NAC's prospects appeared to give cause for optimism; it was 'the most organised nationalist movement in Central Africa', respected by even the Colonial Office as a 'legitimate political force'.<sup>63</sup> Banda's return had galvanised the party, and NAC leaders had been eminently successful in developing a political rhetoric to which a wide range of disparate interest groups were able to respond. Federation had come to be associated with everything negative in villagers' lives, from taxation to soil conservation, from resettlement schemes to dog licenses and this made Congress 'a political danger of the first magnitude', remarked Governor

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<sup>60</sup> The growth of the Province as a centre for political action also owed much to the accentuation of government intervention soon after the creation of the Federation following a period in which state involvement in peasant affairs had been fairly mild. Into this political fray stepped a new generation of politicians, including Chipembere, Chiume and Dunduza Chisiza, deeply influenced by ideas and experiences acquired outside Nyasaland, to provide the centralising leadership that had previously been lacking.

<sup>61</sup> Ranger, T.O., *Are We Not Also Men?*, p.170.

<sup>62</sup> *Central African Examiner*, 17 Jan., 1959.

<sup>63</sup> BL, EAP 121 ANC 5/9, Fox-Pitt to Kaunda, 7 Feb., 1958.

Armitage in 1957.<sup>64</sup> The upshot of the NAC's growth in popularity was the mounting intolerance of opposition that party leaders did little to quell. As J. Footman reported to his colleague J.C. Morgan at the Colonial Office,

Congress have in the past found it difficult to sway the more conservative members of society ... They are now, however, enjoying greater success in winning their support even if this means resorting to intimidation. To take one of the most common forms of intimidation, the threat of arson for example, if a hut burns down, perhaps quite accidentally, all that Congress supporters have to do is to make the observation that the owner is not one of their members, and the allusion goes straight to its mark ... It is with tactics such as these, allied to a constant series of cleverly-veiled threats against their enemies as a whole, that Congress does the damage.<sup>65</sup>

Part of the problem, McCracken suggests was the insistence upon 'absolute unity' adopted soon after Banda's arrival.<sup>66</sup> As the 'Messiah', the 'saviour' of Malawi, the man capable of taking on the British on their own terms, Banda's word was becoming law.<sup>67</sup> Whilst the Congress purported to represent *all* Africans, the NAC's national programme came to be underpinned by coercion. By January 1959, those who openly rejected Congress policy stood in real danger of social ostracism, at worst, physical assault. Banda himself did much to encourage the actions of his followers and younger colleagues, going out of his way to denounce 'moderates'. This was a worrying development, the implications of which were to be felt after the formation of the Malawi Congress Party in 1959.

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<sup>64</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Armitage to Lennox-Boyd, 14 Oct., 1957.

<sup>65</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Footman to Morgan, 28 May, 1957.

<sup>66</sup> McCracken, J., 'Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective', p.239.

<sup>67</sup> NA, CAB 129/98, Report of the Nyasaland Commission of Inquiry', 16 Jul., 1959.

### *Rebuilding Congress Prestige in Northern Rhodesia: ANC Mobilisation in the Towns and Countryside, 1953-57*

Similar to the predicament of the NAC, the failure to prevent Federation gave rise to disillusionment and resignation among African politicians in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>68</sup>

Having united a vast swathe of African opinion behind the anti-Federation cause, the African National Congress quickly lost its purpose. 'Everywhere Congress has lost a lot of face', reported the Northern Rhodesian Special Branch, 'its influence continues to decrease as Africans fast recognise the futility of political actions'.<sup>69</sup>

Although the ANC continued to publish circulars and a monthly paper, the *Congress News*, which first appeared in October 1953, a general sense of apathy displayed towards the party provoked Kaunda to assess that 'some constructive thinking would have to be done if Congress was to hold together'.<sup>70</sup> Part of the decline Kaunda blamed on the absence of an organisational infrastructure capable of sustaining political momentum generated by the proliferation of African grievances. 'As soon as a specific issue is lost or won', he wrote, 'popular interest in the Congress dies. When such an artificial stimulation has been applied, and an issue fails, then there is greater despondency than before. There is no real organisation linking local groups and African protest together'.<sup>71</sup> Also responsible, Kaunda believed, was the strict policy of zero-tolerance pursued by the Northern Rhodesian government. With the suppression of political activists, it was difficult, he said, 'to maintain the enthusiasm' of ANC branches.<sup>72</sup> In January 1955, both Kaunda and

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<sup>68</sup> Epstein, A.L., *Politics in an African Community*, (Manchester, 1958), p.180.

<sup>69</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Jan., 1954.

<sup>70</sup> Kaunda, K., *Zambia Shall be Free* (London, 1966), p.60.

<sup>71</sup> RH, AB 245/7, Kaunda to Mary Benson, 26 Dec., 1954.

<sup>72</sup> Kaunda, *Zambia*, p.65. Indicative of the Government suppression tactics was the rise in police department spending. See SOAS, FPP, Box 5, PPMS 6/4/5, Northern Rhodesia Colonial Report, 1954.

Nkumbula themselves became victims of the government's policy to limit what was considered to be 'subversive' political activity. Following a raid on their offices, they each received a two month prison sentence for possession of 'seditious material'.<sup>73</sup>

The experiences of the early Federal years appeared to have had a marked effect on both men. Whilst their imprisonment had given both men personal experience of the lengths to which the government was seemingly prepared to go in order to suppress African political development, it provided them with a crucial insight into the nature of African politics. If steps were not taken to rekindle African interest in the anti-Federation campaign, Congress was itself likely to become obsolete.<sup>74</sup> Upon their release from gaol, Nkumbula and Kaunda began to reorganise the ANC. Published in the form of a five-year Development Plan, Kaunda launched an appeal for support 'in the national struggle' from all Congress branches in operation. Emphasising that the fight against Federation had been hugely significant in 'uniting the people', momentum must not be lost behind the 'great national movement' fermenting among Africans.<sup>75</sup> In a series of monthly circulars following publication of the Plan, Kaunda appealed for Africans to join the ANC and pledge a small membership fee in order to 'fight for the franchise', 'fight against colour discrimination', and 'fight against the final stage of the dreadful federation which is intended to be Central African Dominion'.<sup>76</sup>

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The report details the rise in police department expenditure during the early years of Federation presumably in an attempt to clamp down on unrest. In 1952, police expenditure stood at £589,336. By 1954, however, spending had doubled to over £1,346,585.

<sup>73</sup> NA, DO 35/4770, Political Intelligence Report, undated. 1955.

<sup>74</sup> Kaunda, *Zambia*, p.65.

<sup>75</sup> RH AB 245/7, Congress Circular, 'The Five Year Development Plan', 26 Sept., 1954.

<sup>76</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 13, PPMS 6/7/2, Congress Circular, No. 1, Vol. VIII, 18 Oct., 1956.



Significantly, it was at this time that ANC leaders took a truly national approach to political organisation. It was here that this juncture that ANC leaders began to see themselves as 'national' figureheads. The problem remained, however, as to how Africans at grass roots, seen by nationalist leaders as key to the success of the anti-Federation campaign, could be mobilised. This was particularly since it was feared that most would be unaffected by, or would simply not understand, the 'high political' ramifications arising from being part of the Federation. In an unsigned letter to Mary Benson of the Africa Bureau, an African ANC member wrote, 'Congress does not mean much to the ordinary man or woman. We must begin to concentrate on day-to-day specific issues, which would then be brought in at a higher political level, for instance by the African representative in Legco'.<sup>77</sup>

The ANC anti-Federation campaign began by holding frequent meetings throughout the country. As Robert Makasa, then an ANC organiser in Chinsali, later reflected it was at these meetings that ANC activists sought to 'awaken the masses', to make the party a presence in the everyday lives of Africans. This was a monumental task, he opined, considering the extent to which the people had been 'brainwashed' and 'indoctrinated' to accept colonialism.<sup>78</sup> During these meetings, Congress leaders worked hard to make relevant the implications of living under colonial rule at local level. Makasa remarked that the first target was Northern Rhodesia's district commissioners; 'well-known' figures in the local community and prominent symbols of the colonial state.

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<sup>77</sup> RH, AB 245/7, Unsigned letter to Mary Benson on 'the condition of Congress', 26 Dec., 1954.

<sup>78</sup> Makasa, K., *Zambia's March to Political Freedom* (Nairobi, 1985), p.41.

We pointed out the evils of absolute power he had and we gave specific examples of dictatorial decisions and arbitrary actions which worked against the real interests of the people. There was no shortage of examples; it was a matter of teaching from the known to the unknown.

The next step, Makasa continued, was to ingrain in the minds of attendees that the dictatorial nature of local government rule was indicative of the degree to which Africans in Northern Rhodesia had been continually exploited by the government, which was acting solely in the interests of Europeans.

We did not fail to expose the discrimination and slave-like conditions under which the Africans laboured in the two wars. We reminded them that they were bundled and pushed into these wars just because they were colonial subjects ... We made it doubly sure that these points got rubbed into their heads that they would understand the evils and disadvantages of colonials. We called upon them to join the political struggle in order to break the chains of colonialism and restore their human dignity as a respectable race.<sup>79</sup>

At meetings attended by chiefs, whose support was deemed essential for boosting the profile of Congress in the villages, it was emphasised that their position would always be vulnerable and subject to the will of the white government 'so long as colonialism remained with us'.<sup>80</sup>

Meetings would often close with a song, heavily laden with political connotations, so as to heighten the political fervour of the people. In interview, Soloman Mwamba, an African shop owner in Lusaka and ANC activist in the 1950s and 1960s, alluded to the powerful effect that such songs had upon attendees. They gave the veneer of something akin to a 'church service' and 'made [us] believe that we belonged to something much bigger, much [more] significant than a small village gathering'.<sup>81</sup> When looking at just one of the songs sung at ANC meetings, it

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* p.41.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* p.43.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Soloman Mwamba, Lusaka, 20 Sept., 2011.

is obvious why they were recounted with such reverence. It is worth quoting in its entirety;

*Ubintungwa bwesu bwakale*  
Our Freedom is our birth right  
It was given to us by God  
He gave the soil to all His men  
Living on earth today.

*Mwebombeni bombeni bombeni*  
Let's do more, do more, do more.  
All we sons of Africa.

*Nomba twabikukisha ifyakale*  
Now let us remember all your deeds  
When you Europeans came to this land  
You mercilessly rounded up our people,  
And sold them as your slave;  
You dropped those one into the sea  
Who were sick and weak,  
You always wickedly laughed at them  
As fish ate them up.<sup>82</sup>

The link with church services was quite deliberate, especially when considering ANC concerns over the barrier that Northern Rhodesia's churches might in future to Congress activities. Congress did in fact have many sympathisers within the church, many had encouraged if not actively supported Congress' anti-Federation campaign. But there nevertheless remained the perception that white Christian leaders were working hand in hand with colonialists, telling their followers that a good Christian could not be a nationalist. Makasa suggested that a number of missionaries even went so far as to preach against Congress in Sunday services. Makasa describes how he and Kaunda were one Sunday impelled to walk out of a church service at Lubwa Mission in protest against remarks made by Reverend

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<sup>82</sup> Makasa, *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*, p.43. Whilst he was unable to recall definitively, Solomon Mwamba remarked that this song sounded very familiar and could well have been one sung at meetings to which he attended.

MacPherson against Congress. The party thus had to plan its strategy accordingly.<sup>83</sup>

The immediate objective was to show people that they could be both Christian and nationalist. What better way to do so, leaders argued, than to tie closely the notion of freedom with God's will? It was perhaps for this reason that every Congress meeting opened with a Christian prayer and that emphasis was placed on the notion that the God spoken about by whites in church was the very same as '*Lesá, our Creator*'.<sup>84</sup>

Whilst meetings were an important tactic used by Congress to arouse mass support, they targeted a comparatively small number of people. They therefore had to be used in conjunction with a more far-reaching campaign that targeted a significantly larger audience. In much a similar way to the NAC, the ANC endeavoured to build Congress prestige by capitalising upon 'local' grievances that could then be presented to Africans at grassroots as a manifestation of living under colonial rule. The most notable exteriorisation of this policy was presented in 1954 during the boycott of European-owned shops in Lusaka. The protests initially began in remonstrance against the discriminatory practices in butcheries, where African customers frequently complained of the degrading manner in which they were forced to buy 'highly stinking meat' served from hatches.<sup>85</sup>

Independent of directives from ANC Headquarters, Congress members began to picket offending shops. Africans respected the picket lines and within week the boycotts had spread to Livingstone, Mazabuka and the Copperbelt

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* p.50.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* p.51.

<sup>85</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.73.

towns.<sup>86</sup> After a period of seven weeks, during which the Congress took their complaints to the African Urban Advisory Council, the Chambers of Commerce advised Lusaka butchers to seal their hatches and open their doors to Africans. Most importantly, in the opinion of both settlers and Africans themselves, the boycotts had gone some way to 're-establish Congress as the champion against injustices'.<sup>87</sup> This was evident not only in the growth of ANC membership that according to Kaunda in a Congress circular had increased to 'well over 20,000', but also by the proliferation of new Congress branches across the territory.<sup>88</sup> It was more likely that the numbers quoted by Kaunda were 'Congress Sympathisers' as opposed to members, but there was no doubt that Congress activists had begun to establish the party as a prominent force in Northern Rhodesian politics. As an intelligence summary commented, 'Congress is taking advantage of the popularity gained by the success of the recently conducted colour-bar campaign and is using this regained popularity as a means of exerting pressure in officially recognised political organisations'.<sup>89</sup> This was arguable reflected in the increase in Congress public meetings, with attendances regularly reaching over 1,000.<sup>90</sup>

The boycotts brought into sharp focus the nature of the struggle in which Africans were involved with Europeans. It thus became a useful weapon for Congress since it relied almost exclusively upon grass root support to sustain

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<sup>86</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Feb., 1954

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Apr., 1954. It was feared by the authorities that unless genuine African grievances against their treatment by traders and in the public places could be forestalled, the boycott weapon will be increasingly and successfully used, with the credit going to Congress'.

<sup>88</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 13, PPMS 6/7/2, Congress Circular, No. 1, Vol. VIII, 18 Oct., 1955. In regards to the increase in branch numbers, see NA DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Mar., 1955. In the Northern Province alone, branch numbers increased from 13 to 21.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr., 1954.

<sup>90</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Jun., 1955.

momentum. Perhaps deliberately timed to coincide with the rolling strikes on the Copperbelt and settler demands for Dominion status, a second more widespread outbreak of ANC-inspired boycotts of European and Asian shops took place in April 1956. At first, owing to disagreements among the participants concerning the extent to which more 'extreme' tactics ought to be used, dissension appeared in ANC ranks, and Nkumbula called off the boycotts on 23 April. In May and June, however, they were resumed, this time more effectively and in a larger number of centres. In most cases, boycotts broke out in response to similar grievances as those expressed in 1954. They began in Lusaka and soon spread to Broken Hill, Chingola and later to Ndola and Kitwe. In each instance the European press reported that the boycotts were '100% effective', a conclusion echoed in the Northern Rhodesian monthly intelligence digest.<sup>91</sup>

Features of the Congress shop boycotts were also discernible in the beerhall protests that took place between 1954 and 1957. There, Congress sought to exploit 'local' grievances arising over the issue of state regulation of the production and consumption of traditional-type grain beers outside beerhalls. For the authorities, beerhalls were a method of keeping African social behaviour within 'acceptable' and 'moderate' lines. To Africans working in Copperbelt towns in which beerhalls operated, they were seen as impersonal mass institutions that bred 'crime and immorality' and eroded traditional customs. They were, for many, a poignant symbol of African subjection to colonial rule.<sup>92</sup> When drinking in beerhalls, it was

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<sup>91</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 13, PPMS 6/7/8, African National Congress, Northern Rhodesia Official News, 31 Jul., 1956. NA, CO 1015/1756 Central Intelligence Committee, Lusaka, Report on African National Congress, 31 May, 1956.

<sup>92</sup> Ambler, 'Alcohol, Racial Segregation and Popular Politics', p.303. Critics blamed beerhalls for encouraging drunkenness, profligacy and increased juvenile delinquency, and especially for

impossible for Africans to conduct their social and cultural rituals that were often the norm in African communities for the communal beer party. Resistance to state alcohol regulations initially took the form of ignoring them, with many instead choosing to drink within the confines of their own homes or areas in order to recreate as much as possible traditional drinking patterns. Women assumed responsibility for brewing and selling the beer, the setting in which it was consumed resembling somewhat of a village context. It quickly became an established occupation for women in towns and was one of the very few means at their disposal to support themselves and their families.<sup>93</sup> Beerhall protest thus possessed a strong economic as well as social character.

The first direct popular challenge to the beerhall monopoly system came in 1954, again in Lusaka. There, competition from illicit producers had sharply reduced beerhall revenues and caused municipal officials to step up police raids on brewers.<sup>94</sup> In April, the women brewers, working with the women's wing of the Lusaka branch of the ANC, began holding meetings to complain about what they regarded as discriminatory state practices. Protest culminated at the end of May in a mass demonstration at government headquarters in the centre of Lusaka. Leaders of the protesters appealed to colonial officials for a modification of the beer monopoly that would permit women to brew beer for sale at the municipal beerhalls, arguing that since Africans were forbidden to consume white liquors such as whiskey and gin they ought to be free to produce and consume their own African

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unseemly behaviour on the part of women. To members of the 'respectable' class of Africans, beerhalls were dismissed as tawdry and unpleasant.

<sup>93</sup> Chauncy, G., 'The locus of reproduction: women's labour in the Zambian Copperbelt, 1927-1953', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 7 (1981), p.145.

<sup>94</sup> *Central African Post*, 28 May 1954.

drinks. The District Commissioner informed the crowd that their demands could not be accommodated as the law forbade private brewing. According to the press account, after the DC withdrew, 'the women rushed forward and adopted a hysterical attitude, and attempted to force an entry into the office'. The Northern Rhodesian police were subsequently summoned and used tear gas to disperse the crowd.<sup>95</sup> In the months that followed there were sporadic recurrences of unrest as compound residents tried to enforce boycotts of the beerhalls.<sup>96</sup>

Recognising the strength of African feeling over the issue, Congress organised a national campaign against beerhalls in 1957. Beginning in Lusaka in early July, the campaign caused considerable disorder in the Copperbelt, shutting down beerhalls in several key locations for extended periods. Pickets spread quickly from Lusaka to the Copperbelt where the boycotts gained almost total effectiveness.<sup>97</sup> In Mufulira, more than '500 demonstrators blocked beer deliveries', while in Luanshya the government was forced to call in paramilitary anti-riot forces to quell protests.<sup>98</sup> The authorities found it difficult to respond to, or even comprehend the anger and militancy of African men and women. Officials ultimately concluded that such demonstrations were not spontaneous but well-orchestrated manipulations of the beer issue by Congress leaders bent on whipping up African discontent.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 June 1954. See also NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, May, 1954.

<sup>96</sup> NA, CO 1015/1228 Extract from Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Jun., 1955.

<sup>97</sup> *Northern News*, 5 August, 1957.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 September, 1957.

<sup>99</sup> NA, CO 1015/1756 Central Intelligence Committee, Lusaka, Report on African National Congress, 31 May, 1957.



The ANC's anti-Federation campaign was confined solely to urban regions. Party leaders were equally concerned to mobilise in the countryside, seeking where possible to exploit discontent arising from the imposition of 'oppressive' state conservation legislation. The zeal with which authorities sought to implement conservation measures reflected an official obsession with the safeguarding of their colonial resources for capitalist interests. As the Copperbelt grew in wealth, and as the need for copper increased with America's strategic stockpiling programme for the Korean War, the need to feed Copperbelt workers became a key priority. The principal focus of state-sponsored development schemes was thus geared towards maximising crop production and conserving natural resources. The departments for Agriculture, Game, Forestry and Fisheries launched several initiatives during this period in order to meet wider development aims. For the Agricultural Department, the introduction of conservation measures such as rotation of crops and planting of fertilising legumes were the key means of conservation. In the Mweru-Luapula region, Luapula Province, the Fisheries Department introduced the Lagreed Law in 1953, a measure intended to protect species of commercially valuable fish, such as Luapula salmon, by extending the closed season from 1 January to 31 March.<sup>100</sup> The implementation and heavy-handed enforcement of legislation proved particularly irksome for a community dependent upon fish for their subsistence and livelihood.<sup>101</sup>

For those living in rural regions, subjection to agricultural restrictions created unnecessary hardships. It was also, some felt, a blatant violation of African

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<sup>100</sup> Musambachime, M.C., 'Rural Political Protest: The 1953 Disturbances in Mweru-Luapula', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1987), p.445.

<sup>101</sup> The manner in which fishing restrictions were enforced by 'fish guards' often involved arrest or destruction of property such as fishing nets.

birth rights. The implementation of rural development schemes accordingly attained political significance, one that Congress became keen to exploit. This was not simply a matter of the colonial state infringing upon agricultural practices, ANC propagandists argued, this was an attempt by settlers to reserve for themselves the resources of the land before it was eventually taken from Africans. 'A colonist is land grubbing' Nkumbula told the people of Northern Rhodesia. 'He knows that the entire economy of the colonial peoples is primarily agricultural ... He does everything possible to impoverish them to make the colonial poor so as to force him into his hands'.<sup>102</sup> This was an easy message to translate: Federation meant domination by Europeans and the spread of discriminatory policy that would displace Africans from their land. The convergence of these issues in the early 1950s, accentuated by the forced movement of thousands of Tonga speaking Africans in the Zambezi Valley to make way for the Kariba Dam scheme – to less adequate and less fertile land no less – undoubtedly worked in Congress' favour. In so doing, party activists were able to encourage swathes of people to defy fishing and game restrictions and to abandon recommended soil conservation practices.<sup>103</sup> In some regions, widespread non-cooperation made difficult state enforcement of their policies, and the threat of violence against officials employed to oversee compliance with regulations caused several provincial authorities to back down.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/14, Statement and Message to the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia by the President General, 6 Mar., 1955.

<sup>103</sup> Datta, K., 'The Political Economy of Rural Development in Colonial Zambia: The Case of the Ushi-Kabende, 1947-1953', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1988), p.270.

<sup>104</sup> In Kambwali in the Mweru-Luapula region in January 1953, for instance, tension over fishing restrictions became violent when the District Commissioner attempted to arrest the main protagonists. In a bid to prevent the DC from taking those arrested, members of the ANC set up a roadblock at Mulwe manned by 150 people armed with sticks and stones. Whilst the DC escaped by

Between 1954 and 1957 in the Mansa District of the Luapula Province, for instance, restrictions on hunting and fishing were lifted and rural development effectively stopped.

As Jotham Momba has demonstrated, however, participation in Congress-inspired rural protest was not at this stage universal. Rather, it was highly dependent upon socio-economic differentiation among the peasantry.<sup>105</sup> In regions where there existed a high concentration of peasants that benefitted economically from state interventionist policies, such as the Improved Farmers Scheme (IFS), launched in Southern, Central and Eastern Provinces in the later 1940 and early 1950s, support for Congress was at best lukewarm. The IFS entailed giving exclusive extension services and agricultural credit to those peasants who were willing to join the scheme and adhered strictly to the methods of crop husbandry prescribed by the Department of Agriculture. In addition peasants joining the scheme were able to purchase farming implements at subsidised prices, also receiving a 'bonus' of K2.70 per acre cultivated that other peasants did not get.<sup>106</sup> The scheme was for some clearly beneficial. Those participating in the IFS, for example, had an average annual income of K80.00, while those outside it averaged K30.00.<sup>107</sup>

When the ANC attempted to discredit the government by attacking the IFS, they subsequently failed to arouse those comparatively well-off, self-improving

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breaking through the barrier, on 2 February 74 police reinforcements were sent to resettle the situation. Musambachime, 'Rural Political Protest', p.448.

<sup>105</sup> Momba, J.C., 'Peasant Differentiation and Rural Party Politics in Colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Apr., 1985), pp. 281-294. The term 'peasant' is used to refer to rural cultivators who produce primarily for subsistence, but are also forced to produce some surplus in order to replenish their farming implements and meet their rent, ceremonial and other obligations.

<sup>106</sup> Dixon-Fyle, M., 'Agricultural Improvement and Political Protest on the Tonga Plateau, Northern Rhodesia', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1977), p.283.

<sup>107</sup> Momba, J.C., 'The State, Rural Class Formation and Peasant Political Participation in Zambia: The Case of Southern Province', *African Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 352 (Jul., 1989), pp. 331-357, p.336.

peasant farmers whose interests were likely to have been adversely affected by participation in the ANC-led non-cooperation campaign. Between 1953 and 1956, many Africans continued to register for membership of the scheme leading many contemporaries to conclude that Africans in rural areas remained generally unmoved by Congress propaganda.<sup>108</sup> As Bishop Pailleux of Fort Rosebery claimed in February 1957,

The mass of the African population in rural areas is more or less unaware of political problems and procedure ... In fact, the Congress claims to be the mouthpiece of African opinion in Northern Rhodesia. In reality, it is the extremists within it who are vocal, and give the impression that they are supported by the whole African population.<sup>109</sup>

Indeed it was only when the state reduced bonuses paid to IFS members and limited the period in which farmers could draw this bonus to five years — a result of the decrease in world copper prices — that opposition was raised by disgruntled farmers. Their response, rather than turn to Congress, was to form their own farmers associations which sprang up in areas of the Southern, Eastern and Central provinces. This did not mean that wealthier peasants alienated themselves entirely from the anti-Federation struggle; issues such as land loss, hardship caused by taxes and general discrimination in the provision of services affected all Africans. Where they differed from others was that their involvement in the ANC was qualified precisely by the degree of state support they obtained in improving their position as cash crop producers.

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<sup>108</sup> On the Tonga plateau, membership numbers continued to increase during this period. In Monze their number rose from 196-373, in Magoye, from 190 to 256 and in Mapangazia from 6 to 85.

<sup>109</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 3/24, Pailleux's remarks enclosed in letter from P.J. Walsh to Kaunda, 5 Feb., 1957.

### ***Intensification of the Anti-Federation Struggle, 1957-58***

Congress actions proved hugely successful in mobilising Africans in a campaign of civil disobedience in Northern Rhodesia after 1956, a year that marked an intensification of the campaign to achieve secession from Federation. Undoubtedly precipitated by Malvern's statement that he hoped to soon achieve Dominion status for the Federation, both Kaunda and Nkumbula urged Africans to unite in order to form a force that no military power could break.<sup>110</sup> In a Congress circular, Kaunda instructed Congress branches to 'arrange big protest meetings' and 'pass resolutions demanding to know what was meant by His Excellency's remark that he wanted rid of the Colonial Office as quickly as possible'.<sup>111</sup> Both leaders warned against the continued marginalisation of Africans in governmental affairs and hoped that Britain would stick to its promise that Africans would not be forced into an 'alliance' with the Federal Government.<sup>112</sup>

The passing of the 1957 Constitution Amendment Act and subsequent decision to ignore the veto of the African Affairs Board represented a critical turning point. Before 1956, Africans identified themselves primarily as 'British Protected Persons'. Despite having been 'sold out' over Federation, Congress leaders continued to 'trust that the Colonial Office will stand by us ... there is nothing else we can trust'.<sup>113</sup> After the passing of the 1957 Act, the tone and language of Congress literature changed drastically. Coinciding with the granting of independence to Ghana, which 'intensified the feeling of nationalism among the

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<sup>110</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.80.

<sup>111</sup> RH, FCB 103/1, Congress Circular, 31 Mar., 1956.

<sup>112</sup> SOAS, FP-P Box 13, PPMS 6/7/2, Nkumbula's speech at the Seventh Annual Conference of the ANC, 8 Oct., 1956.

<sup>113</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, Nkumbula comments in *New Statesman*, undated. 1956.

people', Nkumbula, Kaunda and their counterparts became more assertive in their claims for Northern Rhodesia's secession.<sup>114</sup> 'We must have a government which is a true representation of the people', Nkumbula told his supporters. 'We don't beg this country from anyone ... It is your country, it is mine. I say it is the country of the Africans'.<sup>115</sup> The fierce debate over proposals to entrench settler ascendancy provided a fruitful pretext for arousing African emotions, particularly among the youth. For the first time since the ANC had embarked upon its mobilisation programme, party activists could point to a tangible manifestation of the inherent contradictions of 'partnership' which, in turn, provided the basis for a 'national' appeal. 'The simple fact of the matter as it appeared to Africans', wrote Harry Franklin, Member for African Interests to Lennox-Boyd, was that the 'Europeans were intending to unify and consolidate themselves, so as to maintain and increase their power and dominance over the black people, a line of action easily understandable by Africans in view of the history of their own tribes. Nothing that has happened since Federation has done anything to shake this view', he said. Much had happened to 'strengthen it'.<sup>116</sup>

The escalation of Congress-inspired political agitation was especially apparent in the Northern and Copperbelt Provinces. The change in Congress emphasis, J.C.M. Ng'andu, the ANC's Northern Province Provincial Secretary observed, had marked an upturn in fortunes for the ANC in the north. 'Both corners of the [Northern] Province have been awakened by the national bell', he said. 'Between two and six branches were being registered each week and the Kasama

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<sup>114</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Mar., 1957.

<sup>115</sup> *Central African Post*, Dec., 1957.

<sup>116</sup> NA, CO 1015/1223, Franklin to Lennox-Boyd, 7 Mar., 1957.

district was enrolling members from 40-65 a day'.<sup>117</sup> The ANC's progress had been so impressive that the District Commissioner in Kasama had tried to introduce a system of forced labour 'as a weapon to make people hate Congress'.<sup>118</sup>

Taking place soon after the declaration of a state of emergency on the Copperbelt, the ANC's campaign occurred at a particularly volatile moment. Municipal beerhall boycotts, stepped up by party activists in July, were regarded by authorities as the starting point from which more extreme demonstrations took place. The first and most obvious reason for this belief was the degree of organisation that characterised the boycotts, an organisation that involved the employment of women for picketing, and an opportunism that enabled Congress to take advantage of acts of hooliganism committed by gangs of youths to spread disaffection across the region. In the field, the rapid growth of protest often resulted in political activities extending beyond the reach of party headquarters. Junior party officials were accordingly provided with sufficient latitude to interpret party policy and conduct operations as they saw fit. From the perspective of the authorities, the rise of the Action Group, the 'strong arm' of Congress led by W.K. Sikalumbi, was a worrying development. Not only was the Group held responsible for the deployment of intimidation to enforce compliance with Congress non-cooperation, but it indicated that many of the 'more aggressive' Congress leaders were beginning to gain an upper hand in the party.<sup>119</sup> Most concerning, however, was the notion that the Action Group was functioning independently of directives

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<sup>117</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/5, J.C.M. Ng'andu, Northern Province Provincial Secretary to the Provincial Secretary of the Western Province, Ndola, 6 Jul., 1957.

<sup>118</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/5 J.C.M. Ng'andu, Provincial Secretary to the Provincial Secretary of the Western Province, Ndola, 6 Jul., 1957. In spite of the DC's efforts, Ng'andu added, Kasama District alone was enrolling members from 40-65 a day.

<sup>119</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Aug., 1957.

from ANC leaders. 'I do not think that the Action Group is operating under instructions from Congress headquarters and I do not think the various branches of the Action Group are operating on any coordinated plan', wrote Governor Arthur Benson.

I believe that, having thought up the Action Group, Congress headquarters have virtually no control now over what the Action Group branches do. If Britain raises an army it must either let that army do the fighting or else occupy its time in a post-training period ... No such way of keeping enthusiasm alive in Action Group branches has been thought up either by Nkumbula or anybody else. When Harry Nkumbula decrees a boycott of beer halls therefore local Action Group branches go into action of their own accord.<sup>120</sup>

Nkumbula had created in the ANC a 'frankenstein' that was now 'beyond his control', the *Northern News* reported in September. The whole basis of the boycotts had now changed. They had a 'look of nationalism, naked and unashamed'.<sup>121</sup>

In rural areas too, Congress displayed a renewed determination to undermine the government. Seeking to maximise discontent arising from changes to the IFS, ANC propagandists skilfully manipulated the situation to encourage a number of improved farmers from deregistering from the scheme. 'There is no doubt that the influence of Congress in the Southern Province is at present extremely strong', reported intelligence officials.<sup>122</sup> ANC attacks on state intervention policies precipitated widespread, non-cooperation civil disobedience. In Chief Mwansa's area, Congress convinced many that the government's cattle inoculation scheme would be carried out by men instructed to sterilise cows and kill bulls. When cattle inoculations were scheduled to begin on 29 April, four village

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, Response to the Assessment of the Congress Action Group, 12 Sept., 1957.

<sup>121</sup> *Northern News*, 21 Sept., 1957.

<sup>122</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesian Intelligence Report, Apr., 1957.



headmen failed to produce their animals and were fined £5 each. Over 400 villagers congregated to protest and were dispersed only after persuaded to do so by the Police Mobile Unit.<sup>123</sup> The most serious expression of Congress militancy occurred on 10 September in the Gwembe Valley. The ANC had been active in the area for months, seeking to exploit discontent manifesting from forced eviction of Tonga villagers from the low-lying areas in the path of the rising Lake Kariba, by encouraging non-compliance with the scheme. When security forces were deployed to remove those refusing to accept their fate, riots erupted resulting in the death of nine African villagers. This was followed in Lusaka and Broken Hill by a spate of arson attempts, a train derailment and yet further boycotts.

The year 1957 can therefore be seen as extremely important for nationalists in Northern Rhodesia. First and foremost, this was because the proliferation of urban-rural protests that erupted across the territory had involved a much wider demographic of people than hitherto, including some improved farmers and high-ranking chiefs. As Walima Kalusa has shown, rising popular militancy in 1957 deeply affected those previously ambivalent to participate in Congress' anti-Federation campaign. In his study of Chief Kalonga Gawa Undi X of the Eastern Province, Kalusa demonstrated that for many chiefs, the increase in political temperature in their jurisdictions made difficult the adoption of an indifferent or hostile attitude towards Congress.<sup>124</sup> Given the extent to which Native Authorities and Native Courts were used by the colonial state as a means to forestall Congress progress in

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, Northern Rhodesian Intelligence Report, May, 1957.

<sup>124</sup> Kalusa, W.T., Traditional Rules, Nationalists and the Quest for Freedom in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s', in Gewald, Hinfelaar, Macola, (eds.) *Living the End of Empire*, pp.67-90. In the case of Kalonga Gawa Undi X, Kalusa remarks that his social experiences in Europe, notably the absence of institutionalised racial discrimination in England, Rome and the Vatican, were equally important in shaping his political ideology when he returned to Northern Rhodesia in 1957.

rural areas, imploring them to ban nationalists and to arrest, prosecute and imprison ANC 'agitators' in their jurisdiction, the support of chiefs undoubtedly helped facilitate an increase in political activity in particular areas. Kalonga Gawa Undi X, for instance, gave support to Congress by taking advantage of the law that permitted paramount and senior chiefs in the territory to nominate appointees to Native Authorities. Unsurprisingly, Nkumbula and Kaunda later came to recognise the indispensability of the chief to the nationalist struggle and paid close attention to keeping them 'on side' in key locations.

Perhaps the real significance of this period however lies in the manner in which participants in ANC protests interpreted their actions as forming part of a much wider struggle. In her memoirs, Foster Mubanga, then a teenager who began working for the ANC in 1957, described how her first party assignment was to picket the beerhalls in Mikomfwa Township in Luanshya on the Copperbelt so that people would stop drinking beer and attend the Congress party meeting. On the morning of 12 July, Mubanga, with her female ANC colleagues, positioned themselves at the entrance to the beerhall. When people began to arrive, they found the women 'angry and unsmiling'; they were performing a duty, Mubanga told them, 'because we don't want anyone to enter'. After a short while, three policemen came and asked why the women were creating a disturbance. 'You have no authority to stop anyone from drinking beer if he has his own money', the European policeman told them. 'I order you to leave this instant. If you don't leave, we will shoot'. Some women became fearful and began to give excuses to leave. Many stayed. When more police were called and began to fire tear gas, the women stood firm. Noticing that the women had not moved, the police moved in to arrest

Mubanga and the others. They were released from custody later that day and told to return on 17 August for trial at which the women were convicted and put on probation.<sup>125</sup> The events that transpired on 12 July were distressing for Mubanga, but it 'did not matter what happened to us', she said, 'because we had declared that we would suffer for our country'.<sup>126</sup>

As Mubanga's insightful account indicates, for many people this was no longer a struggle against African discrimination in the localities; this was a struggle for African freedom, for the nation. It was a time in which the protest against white settler domination was replaced by the adoption of a nationalist programme. The year 1957, Arthur Wina, who later became a key figure in the United National Independence Party, remarked in 1960, was a crucial phase in the history of the independence movement. It marked the highest point of the anti-Federation, 'protest' movement and at the same time the birth of a 'truly nationalistic' movement under determined leadership.<sup>127</sup> But whilst it undoubtedly provided ANC activists with renewed impetus to increase calls for African self-government, it also created division within the party that later manifested in open conflict.

### *A contradiction in terms: Nationalist protest and the undermining of the 'national' message in Northern Rhodesia*

One could be forgiven for thinking that by the end of 1957 the ANC's prospects appeared to be bright. Not only had Congress raised popular antipathy to the proposed Federal and territorial constitutional changes, but the party's leaders

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<sup>125</sup> 'Freedom and Labour': the text of Foster Mubanga translated in Harries-Jones, P., *Freedom and Labour: Mobilization and Political Control on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Oxford, 1975), p.24-27.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, N.B. emphasis here is my own.

<sup>127</sup> Wina quote taken from Mulford, *Zambia*, p.45.

appeared to have created a political programme that spoke to a wider demographic. Beneath the surface, however, there existed friction within the movement, rooted in ethno-regional differences that threatened to divide the party. These became especially apparent once disagreement rose to the fore over Congress tactics. The ANC was in many respects a veritable patchwork of ethnic and socio-economic groups. Whilst Congress leaders endeavoured to overcome these boundaries by uniting the waged workforce in the Copperbelt and its vast Northern hinterland with the rural-based agricultural producers in the Southern and Central Provinces under a 'national', anti-Federation agenda, the party's mobilisation strategy served merely to entrench existing divisions. Tension erupted following Nkumbula's statement on the Northern Rhodesian government's 1958 draft *Proposals for Constitutional Change in Northern Rhodesia*, which appeared to suggest the ANC's willingness to work within the narrow constitutional confines of the controversial Benson constitution.<sup>128</sup> Considered by the National Executive Council of the ANC not to be exhaustive enough to pass for a true representation of African opinion, a sub-committee of six was elected to issue a more appropriate response.<sup>129</sup> The NEC's actions appeared to Nkumbula as a challenge to his leadership and in early 1958, with opposition growing, he began purging the Congress of those openly opposed to him. This was considered a 'grotesque' and 'unconstitutional' action by the ANC's organising secretary in Fort Jameson who remarked that Nkumbula was beginning to undermine the very basis of 'freedom'

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<sup>128</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/2, Statement on the Constitutional Proposals for Northern Rhodesia, May 1958.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, Comments on the Proposals for Constitutional Change in Northern Rhodesia, May 1958.

and 'African unity' upon which Congress had been founded.<sup>130</sup> Amos Mwembe was not a lone voice in the party. Nkumbula's 'intrigue and malicious gossip', wrote the members of the Luapula Provincial Executive Council, had 'put Congress to a wreckage point, decomposing it to pieces in all its affairs'.<sup>131</sup> Especially irksome to officials in the Province was the perceived notion that Nkumbula was spending funds collected for the party on 'beer and women'.<sup>132</sup> With votes of no confidence in his leadership being passed by a number of provincial executives and open attacks from demoted officials receiving wide publicity the press, Nkumbula, presumably with a view to reasserting his authority over the Party, announced he would seek re-election at a general conference to be held in October.<sup>133</sup>

In mid-October, Kaunda's return from Tanganyika and India provided the anti-Nkumbula faction with the incentive required to make an assault on the President's leadership. The pivotal moment came during the NEC session at the ANC Conference on 24 October when Kaunda, Simon Kapwepwe, Munu Sipalo and a number of top officials walked out of the meeting in protest. On 26 October, the split was formalised. Nkumbula was re-elected to the presidency of the ANC, while the anti-Nkumbula bloc reconvened at Broken Hill two days later to formally launch the *Zambian African National Congress*. Kaunda was elected President, Paul Kalichini, Vice-President, Kapwepwe, National Treasurer, Sipalo, General Secretary, Walter Sikalumbi, Deputy General Secretary and Sikota Wina, International Publicity

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<sup>130</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/19, Amos Mwembe, Fort Jameson, to Acting National Secretary, 30 Sept., 1958. David Mulford suggests that Nkumbula even went so far as to pass on to police information against ANC officials regarding party financial affairs in order to 'ride the movement of its many dishonest officials'. Mulford, *Zambia*, p.69.

<sup>131</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 4/2, Luapula Provincial Executive Council Resolutions, 18 Oct., 1958.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.56.

Officer. The choosing of the name of the new party was itself significant, deliberately intended to sway disaffected ANC supporters. As Robert Makasa remarked,

‘We unanimously agreed that it would be unwise for us to come out with a completely different name which would not be easy for our supporters to pick up quickly. Since the people were used to the name ‘African National Congress’, our task was to find a name which should be as near to African National Congress as possible but at the same time without creating confusion among our supporters’.<sup>134</sup>

The reasons publicly advanced by ZANC’s leaders for the split focussed predominantly upon Nkumbula’s political failings. He was, Kaunda wrote to his friend Thomas Fox-Pitt of the Anti-Slavery Society, a ‘tired’, ‘moderate’ leader whose ambivalence to challenge the colonial authorities and work within constitutional parameters laid down by the government revealed an underling ‘political despondence’. ‘He has brought us all to a standstill’, Kaunda wrote, ‘because he does not see how Africans can get through their present set of problems’.<sup>135</sup> At local ANC meetings Kaunda was far more vociferous in his condemnation of his former ally. Describing his time with Nkumbula in London in 1957, from which Nkumbula infamously returned to Northern Rhodesia on the eve before an important meeting with the Colonial Secretary to discuss constitutional arrangements, Kaunda told followers in Mikomfwa that their leader was ‘preoccupied with beer and women’. He had done ‘nothing’ while in England, instead indulging in the ‘white woman’ that attended to him. ‘Was this fair?’, Kaunda asked, ‘do you want a leader who behaves like this?’.<sup>136</sup> Other ZANC

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<sup>134</sup> See Makasa, *Zambia’s March to Political Freedom*, p.97.

<sup>135</sup> RH, AB 245/16, Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec., 1958.

<sup>136</sup> Foster Mubanga ‘Memoirs’ in Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.29. Having criticised their former leader, Kaunda told the people that there was a new organisation, one called ‘Zambia’ that would work for the people to bring freedom.

cohorts echoed Kaunda's criticism, utilising similar language to lambast their former President. He was 'lazy', a 'drunkard' that had 'done the country down'; many had 'completely switched him off the front line in the fight for African freedom'.<sup>137</sup>

Given the absence of contradictory evidence, historians such as David Mulford are not necessarily wrong to propose that the split in the ANC owed much to the changing requirements of the nationalist leadership, which required, above all else, a 'well-organised and highly disciplined movement led by men imbued with a spirit of self-sacrifice and commitment to the struggle'.<sup>138</sup> It is crucial, nonetheless, to look beyond justifications so obviously designed to legitimise the split from the 'father' of African nationalism. To concur with Giacomo Macola, the ANC-ZANC divide was perhaps more a consequence of the shifting entho-regional dynamics of African nationalism, closely interwoven with contemporary politico-economic circumstances, which facilitated the rise of competing interest groups each seeking to assert their primacy over the national movement.<sup>139</sup>

Whilst local protest had played an essential role in rebuilding Congress prestige, it ostensibly allowed for particular regions to dictate the pace at which they agitated for change. In the politically charged atmosphere of the Copperbelt and Northern Provinces, Congress branch leaders consistently advocated a more militant course of action. Whilst their President repeatedly emphasised his desire to win African freedom, urban-based members grew ever more disillusioned with Congress' direction. Not only was the President seemingly 'ignoring' the ANC in the north, many complaining that he only visited the area to canvas for votes, but his

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<sup>137</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/9, Phiri to the General Secretary, 30 Nov., 1958.

<sup>138</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.74.

<sup>139</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.56

leadership was seen to possess a distinct bias towards the rural south.<sup>140</sup> Lacking direction and coordination from the centre, and growing increasingly frustrated at the failure to achieve constitutional and socio-economic concessions for Africans, it was easy for many branch officials to take matters into their own hands. The increasing pressure from Congress' urban cohort to increase political agitation was regarded by many in the Tonga-speaking regions of the Southern and Central Provinces as an overt challenge to their place within the movement. Their concerns were evident in a letter sent by Tonga militants in the 'Choma Action Group' to Munu Sipalo in August 1957, warning him that the Tonga tribe did not fear the Bemba in the north 'trying to become the leaders of Congress'.<sup>141</sup>

With his support largely emanating from the south, a product of his Southern Province roots and deep personal affection for the region, Nkumbula's response to the urban challenge was to re-emphasise the primacy of Southern Province concerns in the national struggle. This came to be reflected in his fixation over the Land Question, notably in the anti-Kariba resettlement campaign, and his attempts to forestall urban-based militancy by calling off the municipal boycott campaign in April 1956 and September 1957. It was Nkumbula's concern to appeal to his Southern-Central supporters that caused him to take the controversial decision to participate in the Benson elections. This was not because Nkumbula agreed with the proposals, but because many self-improving, Southern Province-based peasant farmers upon whom Nkumbula was reliant for authority in the face of criticism from the north were unlikely to have countenanced the type of radical

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<sup>140</sup> *Central African Post*, 22 Sept., 1958. J.C.M Ng'andu, Robert Maska and J. Malama Sokoni separately criticised Nkumbula for his paying little heed to ANC members in the north.

<sup>141</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 9/40, 'Choma Action Group Members', 11 Aug., 1957.



opposition necessary to alter them. Unable and unwilling to accept this position, Congress' more militant urban-based cohort opted to break from the ANC. It was not a decision taken lightly, but in order to advance their position it was deemed essential for progress that new organisation was formed, one more capable of representing their interests.

Put simply, the ANC-ZANC split was not solely a consequence of conflict over tactics. Rather, division had its origins in underlying tribal differences which Congress activists had failed to overcome in the construction of the anti-Federation campaign. The course of nationalist politics in Northern Rhodesia in the late 1950s thus presents somewhat of a contrasting picture. Whilst Congress leaders had experienced some success in reigniting popular fervour against the Federation, it was apparent that the national programme was being steadily undermined by competing ethno-regional forces that were driving the movement apart. Despite attempts by the ANC to transcend existing ethno-regionalist boundaries by creating a focal point for popular anger in the localities, it became increasingly difficult to weld together such forces once it became apparent that they were being driven by 'local', region-specific issues. Whilst interpretation of the 'national' anti-Federation message remained generally consistent throughout the territory, the ways in which Congress members worked towards achieving the party's goals was conditioned by the ethno-socio-economic composition of the regions in which the party operated. Ultimately, this created an untenable situation for which the only recourse was the fragmentation of African nationalism. The future for the ANC and ZANC at the close of 1958 was uncertain; the split had cast a long shadow over African politics and valuable momentum had been lost from the struggle. But, in spite of the

tumultuous events that had transpired at the October ANC National Conference, it is essential that the achievements of nationalist politicians are not overlooked. From nothing, Congress leaders had fostered resentment against the colonial state and had laid the foundations upon which mass nationalist sentiment was built. The ANC-ZANC divide ought to be interpreted, then, as a point of transition, the understanding of which is critical in appreciating the trajectory of nationalist development thereafter.

### *Conclusion*

The years 1953-1958 were a period of unprecedented growth for the Congresses of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. By 1958, African opposition to Federation was both vocal and widespread. This owed much to the efforts of the ANC and NAC in translating the anti-Federation message to Africans at grass roots by exploiting local grievances and linking them intimately to the issue of settler domination. Despite the growth of political sentiment among the African masses at this time, however, historians have questioned whether Congress-inspired protests formed part of a genuine, 'national', struggle, or whether they were simply expressions of local discontent. For historians such as Robert Rotberg, local protests in no way represented a 'national' struggle. Resentment of European domination, Rotberg argues, undoubtedly existed, but the mere expression of African hostility to alien control was not sufficient proof of the existence of nationalism.<sup>142</sup> Writing in 1985, Kees Van Donge supported Rotberg's view. The ostensibly local focus of ANC and

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<sup>142</sup> Rotberg, R., 'African Nationalism: Concept or Confusion?', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 4, (May, 1966), p.39.

NAC mobilisation campaigns, he suggested, meant that participation in the anti-Federation struggle was highly dependent upon differing socio-economic and ethno-regional circumstances and, as such, individuals were striving to achieve very different goals. This consequently inhibited the construction of a genuine 'national' programme to which all could subscribe.<sup>143</sup>

The intention of this chapter has been to challenge these ideas. Whilst the motivations for participation in the anti-Federation struggle was subject to regional variation, the fact that Federation was regarded as the source of local problems would at least suggest that ANC and NAC leaders had created a sense of a shared 'national' grievance. Forms of local protest encompassing large groups of people gave Africans common experiences, a sense of common history and, in a similar manner to the experiences of the Indian Congress, a common language. Although Africans had yet to identify themselves as 'Zambians' or 'Malawians', the Congresses had by 1958 succeeded in bringing together Africans, for the first time, in a mass protest movement against the state.<sup>144</sup> At a time in which both Congresses were struggling for support and to stimulate African interest in 'high political' matters, the exploitation of local tension thus performed a crucial function, a means by which Congress could bring together the people of Central Africa, transcending ethno-regional and socio-economic boundaries.<sup>145</sup> The emphasis on popular fears of land alienation or white domination were rooted in historical experience, but they *did* speak to a much broader constituency and, as

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<sup>143</sup> Van Donge, J.K., 'An Episode from the Independence Struggle in Zambia: A Case Study from Mwase Lundazi', *African Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 335 (Apr., 1985), pp. 265-277.

<sup>144</sup> Tangri, R.K., 'The Rise of Nationalism in Colonial Africa: The Case of Colonial Malawi', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Jan., 1968) p.145.

<sup>145</sup> Schmidt, E., 'Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilisation Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 110, Issue 4, (2005), pp. 975-1014.

such, held the potential for overcoming parochial boundaries. It was this shared sense of identity which established the basis for the emergence of mass nationalism. Here, parallels can be drawn with Benedict Anderson's argument pertaining to nationalism, which was not defined, he suggests, by the extent to which individuals affiliated themselves to the boundaries of a particular territory. Rather, the 'nation' took shape through the visible, ritual organisation of popular protest. Whilst most inhabitants within a particular territory were strangers to one another, individuals were bound together in an 'imagined community', in emotional solidarity as well as in a sovereign political entity.<sup>146</sup>

By 1958 African leaders had succeeded in bringing together the educated and uneducated, the urban and rural, in a struggle for African socio-economic and political equality. This was no mean feat given the obstacles facing African politicians in 1953, an aspect that the historiography has a tendency to neglect. It cannot be said that nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was by the end of the period altogether cohesive, however. Although tactics deployed to re-awaken the African masses had rebuilt Congress prestige, they gave rise to divisions that would later come to fatally undermine the premise on which the national struggle had been conceived. The thesis will examine these developments in much greater depth in chapters four and five.

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<sup>146</sup> Anderson, B., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York) 1991, p.6-7.

# 3

## *British Anti-Colonialism and the Development of Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland 1953-1958*

As suggested in the previous chapter, despite the failure of the Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to achieve meaningful African political advance in the Federation between 1953 and 1958, Congress leaders had nevertheless succeeded in mobilising vast swathes Africans to the anti-Federation cause. In so doing they were not only able to imprint upon the minds of policy makers in London that African nationalism was a growing force in Central Africa, but were also able to stake their claim to the national dispensation then materialising.<sup>1</sup> Historiographically, the early success of the African National Congress [ANC] and the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC] political mobilisation and anti-Federation campaign rested almost entirely upon the initiative of the small cohort of educated African politicians. It was their role in linking together local protests which helped translate complex political arguments against Federation into easily understandable terms, creating the basis for a genuine 'national' movement. What has remained a relatively unexplored facet of this process is the extent to which both Congress

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<sup>1</sup> Wood, J.R.T., *The Welensky Papers: A History of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Durban, 1983), p.595.

parties relied upon external agencies, notably British anti-colonial sympathisers, for support in achieving their political and popular mobilisation objectives.

That the crucial correlation between British anti-colonial and national constituencies has remained overlooked undoubtedly lies in the compartmentalisation of knowledge in Imperial and Africanist historiography. Even those studies that have explored in depth the impact of the anti-colonial movement upon the anti-colonial struggle say very little about the extent to which these individuals and left-wing groups engaged with, and influenced, the trajectory of nationalist politics on the spot.<sup>2</sup> This has resulted not only in the tendency to regard nationalist development as a process confined to the territories in which nationalist movements proliferated, but has similarly resulted in the tendency to discuss the work of British anti-colonialists within an exclusively *British* context. The intention of this chapter is to provide a necessary corrective to these prevailing historiographical trends.

By virtue of a sustained campaign waged on behalf of Africans in Britain, and by providing financial assistance and organisational advice, anti-colonialists handed nationalist leaders an important boost in the fight to win African political advancement. In serving as a conduit between the periphery and metropole, anti-colonialists helped legitimise the anti-Federation struggle, at the same time winning for the ANC and the NAC status as *the* representatives of African political opinion in their respective territories. By 1958, these parties and their leaders, Harry Nkumbula and Hastings Banda, were seen by the British government as being those

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<sup>2</sup> See for instance Howe, S., *Anti-colonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire 1918-1964*, (Oxford, 1993), and Goldsworthy, D., *Colonial Issues in British Politics 1945-1961: From Colonial Development to 'Wind of Change'* (Oxford, 1971).

with whom future negotiations over African advancement would have to take place. Anti-colonialist actions, then, cultivated for the Congresses a degree of respectability in Britain and the West, something that not only gave Congress leaders confidence in pushing forward with their anti-Federation agenda, but something that would decisively alter the pattern of nationalist engagement with the wider international community in the early 1960s.

*Anti-Colonialism in British Politics and the Engagement with African Nationalism in Central Africa, 1953-1958*

The establishment of the Federation in Central Africa helped stimulate a much wider awareness of colonial issues among sections of the British left. It was, as David Goldsworthy suggests, a time of deepening liberal concern at the entrenchment of European settler ascendancy over African majorities, and, more specifically, the British government's lack of initiative in halting this process.<sup>3</sup> During the early 1950s, the issue caused swathes of British left-wing ministers and political activists to call for a fundamental reappraisal of Britain's colonial policy. This resulted in the formation of organisations dedicated to providing colonial subjects with a prominent voice in the metropolitan legislature that might otherwise have remained unheard.<sup>4</sup> Two of the most prominent were the Africa Bureau, formed under the directorship of Reverend Michael Scott in 1952, and the Council for the Defence of Seretse Khama<sup>5</sup>, later to evolve into the Movement for Colonial

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.155.

<sup>4</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/5/3 Box 7, Movement for Colonial Freedom Policy Statement, 11 Apr., 1954.

<sup>5</sup> Seretse Khama was the heir to the throne of Bechuanaland. He was exiled from his homeland by the British Labour government in 1951 on account of South Africa's objection to Khama's marriage to a white woman, Ruth Williams. Interracial marriage was at the time banned in South Africa.

Freedom [MCF] under the leadership of Fenner Brockway in 1954.<sup>6</sup> Established with a remit to deal exclusively with African affairs, the Africa Bureau's principal objective was to serve as an intermediary between Africans and the British people, at the same time assisting Africans in their opposition against 'unfair discrimination and inequality of opportunity' in Africa.<sup>7</sup> The Bureau's activities in support of its goals came down in practice to the presentation of information and arguments designed both to mobilise opinion and to influence policy makers.

The MCF defined its role in similar terms, and like its predecessor, the Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism [COPAI], the Movement's main objectives were primarily geared towards establishing among influential sections of British society a paternalistic approach to Britain's management of its colonial peoples. Although essentially a partisan institution, the Movement was part of a great tradition of dissent in British politics. It subsequently drew into its membership large numbers of predominantly left-wing individuals including over 100 Labour MPs, some of whom even chaired MCF committees. At its peak, the MCF could count among its affiliates 38 Constituent Labour Parties and a considerable number of high profile Labour sponsors including future Prime Minister Harold Wilson, future Colonial Secretary Anthony Greenwood and the indefatigable anti-colonial campaigner and MP for Blackburn, Barbara Castle. The immediate purpose of the MCF was to create a 'psychological revolution' throughout the colonies and in Britain in order to 'create goodwill' and 'release the energies of the people into

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<sup>6</sup> Howe, *Anti-colonialism*, p.231. The MCF's foundation was the result of discussions between the officers of three anti-colonialist lobbies; the British Centre of the Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism, the Council for the Defence of Seretse Khama and the Protectorates, and the British Guiana Association.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p.266.



channels of social reconstruction'.<sup>8</sup> Colonial people had 'lost confidence in Britain', millions had been 'sacrificed to the interests of white settlers', and unless change was forthcoming, the hope of regaining their confidence would be irrevocably 'destroyed'.<sup>9</sup>

There were clear distinctions between the Africa Bureau, the MCF and existing colonial research groups such as the Fabian Colonial Bureau [FCB]. Whereas the FCB served mainly as an advisory body that sought to influence colonial policy 'from the top', a corollary of its close links with the Labour Party, the Africa Bureau and the MCF functioned more as an anti-colonial crusade. Whilst the FCB usually worked in isolation, to proceed by discussion and research and to achieve its ends through private contacts, the Africa Bureau and the MCF were eager to form links with wide sections of the community and to supplement their private activities with large-scale public campaigns. As such, both groups were prolific in publishing pamphlets, leaflets, newsletters and information bulletins for the general public and in arranging mass public meetings during times of crisis in the colonies.

The upheaval caused by the inauguration of the Federation in 1953 and the subsequent rise in membership of anti-colonial organisations, many of whom were also Labour MPs, increasingly brought pressure to bear on the Labour Party to respond to developments. By 1955, Labour's back-bench MPs, over half of whom were sponsors of the MCF, could no longer be treated as simply another pressure group. Although the highest command, including Hugh Gaitskell, who became the Party's leader in December 1955, shunned contact with the Movement, at least two

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<sup>8</sup> SOAS, M[ovement] for C[olonial] F[reedom] Papers, Box 1/T3, 'Immediate Application of MCF Principles, Undated.

<sup>9</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/5/3, Box 7, Movement for Colonial Freedom Policy Statement, 11 Apr., 1954.

of the second-echelon men, Nye Bevan, architect of the Welfare State, and Harold Wilson, then serving as Labour's spokesman on finance, were themselves among the sponsors. For a body that remained unaffiliated to the Party, this represented a significant overlap. A clear expression of the renewed impetus given to Labour's colonial policy from the back-benches could be seen in the formation of four 'working parties' to draft reports on plural societies, economic aid, the smaller territories and colour discrimination.<sup>10</sup> What emerged from these discussions was the need to expand the work of the Party's Commonwealth Sub-Committee. 'Over the past two years most of the colonial policy writing we set ourselves has been completed and now forms a body of specific policy', remarked Commonwealth Officer John Hatch, 'we now need time to take stock and overhaul our administration in order to maintain closer and more regular contact with other socialist parties throughout the Commonwealth'.<sup>11</sup>

The Federation had in its initial ideological incarnation been the inspiration of Labour-Fabian progressivism. As chapter one has argued, it was a measure intended to preserve African future political development by staving off pressure from settlers for amalgamation and moderating radical tendencies in African protest exhibited during the anti-Federation campaign. Even before the Federation came into existence, therefore, the Labour Party had been reluctant to criticise a scheme it had initially championed, albeit in a different form. With a number of

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<sup>10</sup> The working parties were set-up by the Party's Commonwealth officer John Hatch. They represented all factions within the party. See for instance, L[abour] H[istory] A[rchive], based at the People's History Museum, Manchester, L[abour] P[arty] A[rchive], C[ommonwealth] S[ub] C[ommittee] of the N[ational] E[xecutive] C[ouncil].55/23, Minutes of Meeting, 8 May, 1956, CSC.55/25, Minutes of Meeting, 12 Jun., 1956, and also NEC Minutes, 27 Jun., 1956.

<sup>11</sup> LHA, LPA CSC.50/22, Programme for the Commonwealth Sub-Committee 1957-58, John Hatch, Nov., 1957.

Labour Party members joining the anti-colonial crusade in the mid-1950s, indicated by the fact that in 1954 over 88.5 per cent of all Labour's colonial questions emanated from MPs affiliated to anti-colonial bodies, and with the Federation failing to live up to preconceived expectations, Labour's leadership felt obliged to respond to developments in Central Africa.<sup>12</sup>

The publication of *The Plural Society* in June 1956 marked Labour's official arrival at a position that the anti-colonial left had unofficially advocated for some years, a commitment to egalitarian democracy for plural societies.<sup>13</sup> Whilst the document acknowledged that multiracialism might serve as a 'transitional phase', it explicitly stated Labour's hope to abandon the Conservative government's current policy in multi-racial colonies, which was based upon 'racial difference' as opposed to 'human identity', and to 'forget race and colour', since this would be the 'truest safeguard of racial minorities'.<sup>14</sup> The document was important not merely because it implied Labour's adherence to the aims of anti-colonial bodies such as the MCF and the Africa Bureau, but because many Labour supporters, including the FCB, believed that it committed the Party to a goal 'scarcely distinguishable' from that of indigenous nationalists.<sup>15</sup> Given that both the NAC and ANC had been campaigning for the removal of Federation, this was not necessarily true. Labour's support for a more proactive advancement policy in the colonies did, nonetheless, indicate that the issue of indigenous rights to self-government was not simply the goal of handful of idealists in British politics. No longer could MPs such as Brockway be regarded as

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<sup>12</sup> Howe, *Anti-colonialism*, p.254.

<sup>13</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Labour Party Conference, Brighton, 28 Sept., 1957.

<sup>14</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, *The Plural Society*, The Labour Party, 1956 pp.29-42.

<sup>15</sup> *Venture*, November 1957, p.1.

mere back-bench fantasists; rather, they came to be regarded as articulating the opinions of a major political rival.

### *Anti-colonial Activities and Nationalist Development in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland*

The anti-colonial response to the decision of the Conservative government to override African opposition to the Federation in 1953 was to step up the campaign for increased African representation. As John Hatch, Labour MP and member of the FCB's Working Committee, wrote, 'practical and serious' measures were needed to 'develop the political consciousness and political organisation of Africans' in order that a vehemently anti-British strain of colonial nationalism, similar to that developing in Kenya, was prevented from rising to the fore.<sup>16</sup> Hatch's comments are significant, not because they indicated a willingness to help Africans, but because they point to a hyper-sensitivity among British anti-colonialists to preserve as many indigenous 'friends' in the colonies with whom Britain might in future work alongside to ease the transition to independence. Here, parallels can be drawn with Nicholas Owen's work on the British anti-colonial movement and Indian nationalism. In seeking to 'organise' Indian nationalists, Owen suggests, British anti-colonialists were attempting to cultivate a type of nationalism that fitted comfortably with their existing beliefs and their sense of how authentic progressive movements were supposed to work.<sup>17</sup> In so doing, they hoped to prevent the rise of extremist anti-British nationalism that would more than likely result in the exclusion of British influence in India for years after independence.

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<sup>16</sup> RH, AB 230/6, Meeting on Central Africa: Questions held at the Commons, 15 Jul., 1953.

<sup>17</sup> Owen, *The British Left and India*.

It was not until African leaders seized the initiative that anti-colonialists took a proactive approach to assist the ANC and NAC. Part of the reason was because anti-colonialists remained sensitive to the accusation that they, rather than Africans themselves, were driving the movement for African advancement. As Director Michael Scott remarked to his colleagues in the African Bureau, Africans had to be the 'driving force' behind the anti-Federation campaign.<sup>18</sup> For their part, Congress leaders were especially keen to look beyond Central Africa for assistance. Support from external agencies would be crucial to Congress' future success, remarked Secretary General Kenneth Kaunda in a circular to the ANC's British 'friends' in September 1954:

What next cannot be answered by a handful of men and women who are at the top of the Congress. It's a delicate question and as such, it needs men and women of various calling to come together and do something about it. Know then, Friends, that whether you be individuals or organisations, you are being asked to help us with this big venture into the unknown. This is being sent to you because of the interest that we think you have in our development and we would very much appreciate your advice on what you think we should do to help our people advance politically, economical and socially'.<sup>19</sup>

In both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the first priority of anti-colonialists was to seek, where possible, to assist in the ambitious mobilisation campaigns of the NAC and ANC.<sup>20</sup> The situation facing the Nyasaland Congress was regarded as particularly 'desperate'. The 'appalling weakness' of Congress organisation, Colin Legum, a prominent anti-colonial and anti-apartheid activist then working as a reporter for *The Observer*, noted, precluded information from the periphery reaching the British press. Worse still was the inability of the Congress to

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> RH, AB 245/7, K. Kaunda, Congress Circular, 'The Five Year Development Plan', 26 Sept., 1954.

<sup>20</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Hatch to Kaunda, 8 Feb., 1957, As John Hatch commented, without information from Central Africa, 'the campaign for African political rights would in effect cease to exist'.

either control or direct a large-scale campaign on the basis of their present resources. 'There is unquestionably a deep feeling for Congress among the people', he said, 'but it is not canalised or under effective control. People keep telling me that they are waiting for a lead from Congress, but the lead doesn't come'.<sup>21</sup> Circumstances in Northern Rhodesia were somewhat more hopeful, yet the party's programme remained a cause for concern. What was needed, remarked Thomas Fox-Pitt, a former District Commissioner in Northern Rhodesia then serving as Director of the British Anti-Slavery Society, to his friend Kaunda, was to imprint on the minds of Congress leaders the need to evolve from a protest movement into a mass political party so that the African people were 'conscious of its lead in their lives both on local level of village politics and in the wider range of national and Federal subjects'.<sup>22</sup> This was framed in a series of proposals put forward by the Africa Bureau for the ANC in February 1955. If Congress was to win for Africans political and socio-economic equality, the document suggested, 'it must see to its organisation; establish a branch in every town and village and organise regular provincial and national conferences'. The key to this transition would lie in a transformation of the Congress programme. Intrinsically 'negative' attacks on the government and imperialism had to be replaced by a 'programme of Positive Action' that would commit the Congress to working towards securing political and socio-economic reform for all African citizens.<sup>23</sup>

To facilitate this transition, the aforementioned British anti-colonialists adopted several approaches. Since their inception, both the ANC and NAC had

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<sup>21</sup> RH, AB 237/2, Legum, 'Report on the Situation in Nyasaland', 2 Sept., 1953.

<sup>22</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, Fox-Pitt to Kaunda, 7 Feb., 1955.

<sup>23</sup> RH, AB 245/7, 'Suggestions for the Northern Rhodesian African Congress', Feb., 1955.

suffered chronic financial difficulties, a problem exacerbated by government legislation banning the raising of funds without requisite permits.<sup>24</sup> Congress leaders repeatedly lamented the lack of means to distribute copies of Congress newsletters en masse subsequently inhibiting them from widely propagating their national campaign. In the party's early years, the ANC relied almost entirely upon donations from well-wishers to function. In August 1951, for instance, it was only the £10 donated by Fox-Pitt that made it possible to distribute 200 copies of an anti-Federation memorandum that Congress President Nkumbula had recently submitted to a delegation of four visiting British MPs.<sup>25</sup> Raising the funds necessary to ensure the continuation of Congress operations on a day-to-day basis, therefore, became a central platform in the British anti-colonial campaign. Acknowledging the difficulties experienced in passing news and opinions to 'influential persons' in Britain, the Africa Bureau, the FCB and the Anti-Slavery Society each separately offered to publish and distribute ANC and NAC material on their behalf.<sup>26</sup> In addition, provisions were made to raise funds to provide both Congresses with loans or gifts required during times of crisis or need. In 1953, for example, when the NAC sought legal advice to challenge the imposition of the Federation, the Africa Bureau provided the Congress with a loan of £30 to settle their account with Privy Council Appeal Agents.<sup>27</sup>

Another important function of anti-colonialists was to intervene in individual cases of discrimination against Africans. In 1954, for example, Mary Benson of the

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<sup>24</sup> RH, AB 238/3, T. Banda to Mary Gluckman, Manchester and District Council of African Affairs, 3 Feb., 1957.

<sup>25</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.43.

<sup>26</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, Fox-Pitt to Kaunda, 24 Jun., 1957.

<sup>27</sup> RH, AB 231/6, Account statement from Bryden and Williams, Privy Council Appeal Agents, Undated, 1953.

Africa Bureau wrote personally to Colonial Secretary Alan Lennox-Boyd to enquire whether Edwin Chibambo, a prominent NAC organiser in Blantyre then under a Restriction Order at Port Herald, could be provided with better housing.<sup>28</sup> As revealed by Lennox-Boyd's reply, approaches of this manner would, on occasion, be successful. 'The Governor informs me that Mr. Chibambo has moved into a Class 'C' African house, which is the best type of dwelling provided at Port Herald for African Civil Servants', Lennox-Boyd wrote. 'If he wishes to have his entire family with him, arrangements will be made to build him a suitable house'.<sup>29</sup>

Campaigning on behalf of individuals might only have been a small way in which anti-colonialists hoped to improve the African predicament, but their actions had much greater relevance to the situation Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. By acting as a conduit between the metropole and the periphery, representing Congress interests in Britain, nationalist leaders were not only provided with an official mandate from which the anti-Federation campaign could be fought, but also with 'high political' patronage. It was arguably the elevated status accruing from connections with prominent left-wing political figures in Britain that won for both parties an audience with British government officials, who soon identified them as *the* principal articulators of African political grievances. As G.H. Baxter of the Commonwealth Office reluctantly admitted, by raising the profile of the anti-Federation struggle, anti-colonialists succeeded in 'building up the self-importance of racialist leaders', legitimising their claims for African enfranchisement and

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<sup>28</sup> RH, AB 240/8, Chirwa to Benson, 25 Dec., 1954.

<sup>29</sup> RH, AB 240/8, Lennox-Boyd to Scott, 19 Apr., 1955.



consolidating the Congress position in Central Africa by enhancing their status in the 'eyes of Africans in their territories'.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps the most important anti-colonial intervention at this time, however, was the advice given to Congress leaders to moderate the campaign for African advancement. Only by such means, it was felt, would nationalism be given a veneer of respectability in the eyes of British and colonial authorities that might later translate into tangible constitutional concessions. Congress leaders were thus urged to preserve the British connection by continuing to emphasise Britain's continuing role in 'guiding' Africans towards advancement. To give the impression that Africans were ready to abandon the British connection, wrote Fox-Pitt to Kaunda, would do nothing but convince sceptics in British official circles that Africans would begin to follow an extreme 'anti-British' course if given greater responsibility.<sup>31</sup> In Congress literature and future plans for action, he continued, Congress must endeavour to appeal to Britain's paternalist sensibilities, playing-up Britain's responsibilities as African 'protectors'.<sup>32</sup>

The adoption of such tactics, Michael Scott commented, would do much to help nationalism 'control itself' and to 'impose its own limitations'.<sup>33</sup> This was especially important, given the concerns that communists were allegedly ready to exploit unrest in Central Africa.<sup>34</sup> Considering Federal Prime Minister Roy Welensky's own attempts to exacerbate the potential for communist

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<sup>30</sup> NA, CO 1015/2121, Minute by Baxter, 28 May, 1957.

<sup>31</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, Fox-Pitt to Kaunda, 7 Feb., 1956.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> NA, DO 35/7290, Africa Bureau Memorandum, 'Policy for Africa', issued on behalf of the Executive Committee, 16 May, 1956.

<sup>34</sup> See for instance the FCB's Secretary, Marjorie Nicholson's letter to Fox-Pitt in which she states that any tendency towards extremism would potentially create a situation in which 'communist forces' would seek to capitalise upon potential unrest. RH, FCB 101/2, Nicholson to Fox-Pitt, 21 Mar., 1957.

encroachment, claims that appear to have been deliberately engineered to heighten Britain's sensitivity to Soviet Union expansion into the colonial empire in this period, it was imperative that Congress leaders were advised to appear 'moderate', 'reasonable', and predisposed towards British influence.<sup>35</sup> As Fox-Pitt told Dixon Konkola, the ANC's Deputy National Secretary, in April 1957, what was needed was a 'clear statement of determined policy' from Africans pertaining to the unacceptability of the constitutional safeguards in the Federal constitution, which ought to be based on the premise, not of obtaining 'African' citizenship, but of obtaining citizenship for 'British Protected Persons'.<sup>36</sup>

Until the passing of the 1957 Constitutional Amendment Act, an act that gave the Federal government greater autonomy in handling the Federation's external affairs and guaranteed that the British would not amend or repeal any federal act, both the NAC and ANC generally adhered to advice given by their anti-colonial allies.<sup>37</sup> Nkumbula himself was extremely sensitive to any potential external criticism that might damage the ANC's prospects. In December 1955, for instance, Nkumbula wrote to Simon Zukas, friend and supporter of the Congress who had been deported to Britain in 1953, that Dixon Konkola, Justin Chimba, Edward Mungoni Liso and Robinson Puta 'could not lead Congress because they were in contact with Communists'.<sup>38</sup> Whilst this was reflective of the internal dynamics of the struggle for supremacy in Congress, (Konkola later suggesting to Zukas that

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<sup>35</sup> RH, WP 237/6, 'Internal Security Appreciation: Rhodesia and Nyasaland', 27 Apr., 1956.

<sup>36</sup> SOAS, FP, PPMS 6/7/4, Fox-Pitt to Konkola, 8 Apr., 1957.

<sup>37</sup> RH, AB 107/2, Joint Announcement by the Governments of the UK and of the Federation, 27 Apr., 1957. It also brought forward the Federal Review Conference to 1960 where the future of the Federation as a full member of the Commonwealth would be considered.

<sup>38</sup> Quote from Vickery, K., 'Odd Man Out: Labour, Politics and Dixon Konkola' in Gewald, Hinfelar, Macola, (eds.) *Living the End of Empire*, p.119.

‘Harry wanted me out’), it nevertheless pointed to a prevailing belief that Congress needed to appear to all intents and purposes a ‘moderate’ political party.<sup>39</sup> Thus, whilst it was widely acknowledged that the actions of the Colonial Office in ‘selling out’ Africans over Federation had ‘suddenly pushed us into dark times’, the British ought still to be ‘trusted to stand by us’ since there was ‘nothing else’ Africans could trust.<sup>40</sup>

Having initially struggled to come to terms with the proliferation of anti-colonial national movements, largely on the premise that nationalists lacked the rudimentary political knowledge that was deemed essential if nationalists themselves were to achieve greater constitutional rights, signs that Congress leaders were formulating their own political programme by incorporating suggestions made by their British allies brought the British Labour Party into greater contact with the Congress parties in Central Africa.<sup>41</sup> Coinciding with the publication of *Plural Society*, Labour Party leaders resolved to strengthen ‘friendship ties’ with the Congress parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>42</sup> Support for the Congresses was expressed in the direct questioning of the racial policies of the Federal Government. James Johnson, Labour MP for Rugby and notable spokesman for the Party on colonial affairs, wrote frequently to Welensky after visiting Central Africa in early 1957, lamenting the failure of Federal authorities to provide a lead for Europeans to ‘bridge the gap between the colours’. Whilst Welensky countered

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, *New Statesmanship*, undated. 1956.

<sup>41</sup> LHA, LPA, CSC/NEC.57/18, Minutes, 20 Feb., 1957. The desire to cultivate stronger links with nationalists was framed in a series of proposals by the Commonwealth Sub Committee for a ‘Commonwealth Fund’ to be established in order to ‘finance contacts between the Party and Commonwealth territories’ and ‘to help Socialist and allied political organisations in the Commonwealth’.

<sup>42</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Morgan Phillips to ANC Headquarters, 8 Dec., 1957.

that observers in Britain did not understand the day-to-day difficulties of dealings with Africans, Johnson argued that the failure to encourage African political development would only serve to inflame tensions in Central Africa.

Honestly, Roy, your people are completely failing to awaken a response in the minds and hearts of Black men and their women ... If your people fail to give leadership in this regard ... you are consigned to continuing racial tension and political uncertainty. I am immensely concerned by this – if your leadership does not get the response, then this grand concept of white and black living together will be finished and its effect on Central Africa catastrophic.<sup>43</sup>

The Party's most significant activity, however, was not its canvassing of politico-moral arguments on the Africans' behalf in public, but in providing the Congresses with informal tutelage in the principles of mass party organisation, tactical advice on dealings with government officials and assistance in the drafting of political programmes. To ensure that Labour members were well positioned to operate on their behalf, MPs consistently advocated the need for Congress leaders to keep sympathisers in Britain informed of developments in Congress policies. In February 1957, a critical time in which anti-colonialists were formulating a strategy to prevent the imposition of the Constitution Amendment Act, John Hatch reminded Kaunda of the 'tremendous importance' of regularly informing the Labour Party 'of the present conditions and the policy of the Congress' so that the Party was well placed to act in Congress' interests.<sup>44</sup> The most notable manifestation of the policy to assist the Congresses was the advice given to Kaunda during his sojourn to Britain in mid-1957 to study party organisation, a visit from which he returned 'reinvigorated' with a sense of how an organisation should be

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<sup>43</sup> RH, WP 629/7, Johnson to Welensky, 23 Apr., 1957.

<sup>44</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Hatch to Kaunda, 8 Feb., 1957.

run.<sup>45</sup> The actions of the party were hugely appreciated by African political activists. Writing to Fenner Brockway, Frank Chitambala, the ANC's Secretary in the Eastern Province, extended his 'national thanks to the Labour Party' and stated that Africans 'have to hope and pray that may God rise up the Labour and be in power'.<sup>46</sup>

### *The Struggle against Federation at Home: Anti-colonial Activities in Britain, 1953-58*

The anti-colonial campaign in Central Africa was predominantly geared towards stimulating African development. The campaign in Britain was geared towards holding the Conservative government accountable for its policy towards Africans in Central Africa. For the MCF in particular, its role was to act as a pressure group in the metropole and it was upon this basis that the Movement offered its services to the ANC.<sup>47</sup> With a distinct presence in Parliament, anti-colonialists concerned about the government's policy in the Federation could place Central Africa in the spotlight. Questions asked by MPs in regards to colonial issues enabled MPs to pinpoint topics, to compel ministerial answers and to challenge these answers; and since questions were asked and answered continually they also provided a steady supply of material for colonial newspapers and other organs of publicity.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, it was said that copies of *Hansard* became a 'best seller' in Nyasaland.<sup>49</sup> Apart from this general consideration, Parliamentary questions provided the best means for

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<sup>45</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.56.

<sup>46</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 14, PPMS 6/7/4, Chitambala to Brockway, 3 Feb., 1958.

<sup>47</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/9, International Secretary of MCF to the African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia, undated 1956.

<sup>48</sup> Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics*, p.79.

<sup>49</sup> Power, *Building Kwaca*, p.102.

exposing and criticising the policies and actions of the British government at times of controversy. This not only heightened government sensitivity to the repercussions of their policies, but it also forced ministers to account for them in Parliament, an arena in which the government would be unable to avert the critical gaze of those sympathetic to the African cause in the British polity.

Before 1957, the anti-colonial Parliamentary campaign had largely centred upon isolated incidents that revealed the increasing inability of the Colonial and Federal authorities to promote African advancement. When the Constitutional Amendment Act was proposed, and the subsequent decision made to ignore the veto of the African Affairs Board, however, criticism of the Federal and British government's record in Central Africa intensified. In a series of impassioned debates in June 1957, the Labour frontbench and its anti-colonial contingent reminded Parliament that Africans could not be abandoned to the whims of white settler supremacy Federal Government; Britain was still obliged to exercise a degree of influence over Central African affairs and to promote the establishment of a full democratic machinery.<sup>50</sup> As John Dugdale, Labour spokesman on Colonial affairs and staunch opponent of Federation remarked in June,

We have certain duties to protect African interests over a very wide field. We may think that they do not need to be protected and that the Government of Central Africa will conduct its affairs so that there will be no need for us to exercise that power, but we must recognise that we have that power and that we would use it if necessary, so we should discuss matters pertaining to it.<sup>51</sup>

Timed to coincide with a debate in the Commons, the Africa Bureau and the MCF held several committee meetings to discuss the proposed changes to the Federal

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<sup>50</sup> *HCD*, vol. 571 col. 1111, 4 Jun., 1957, See speech made by James Callaghan, Shadow Colonial Secretary.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

constitution. The resulting resolution, later sent to the Earl of Home, who had replaced Lord Swinton as Commonwealth Secretary in April 1955, condemned the decision to ride roughshod over African rights.<sup>52</sup>

This Council condemns the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Constitutional Amendment Bill 1957 and the Electoral Bill as measures which will in fact diminish the already meagre African representation in the Federal Assembly, and is dismayed at the recent statement by Lord Homes signifying the intention of the Government to ignore the advice of the Federal African Affairs Board and give approval of the Bill.<sup>53</sup>

The sheer magnitude of the issue, and the extent of African discontent to which it gave rise, was sufficient to provoke a tense debate in the Commons on 25 November 1957.<sup>54</sup> Arthur Creech Jones, Labour's former Colonial Secretary and founding member of the FCB, and Barbara Castle, MP for Blackburn and member of the MCF, questioned the legitimacy of British actions and emphasised that Africans were in fact gaining little from alleged attempts to 'increase' African representation. 'Why', asked Creech Jones, 'does the Government persist in this policy in the face of African opposition and after such a shabby deal for the Africans?'<sup>55</sup> Labour's position in the debate was informed by the visit of a Labour delegation, led by Shadow Colonial Secretary James Callaghan, to Central Africa in September. At the end of a three week tour, Callaghan declared at a press conference in Salisbury that universal suffrage was the ultimate objective for Central Africa.<sup>56</sup> Under the terms of the 1957 Act, however, this would not be

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<sup>52</sup> NA, DO 35/7290, 'Memorial addressed to the Rt. Hon. Earl of Home', Africa Bureau Circular, 25 Nov., 1957. The Circular was signed by: The Anti-Slavery Society, the Birmingham District Council for African Affairs, Sheffield Africa Committee, the Cambridge Africa Council, and the Edinburgh Committee of the Scottish Council for African Questions.

<sup>53</sup> SOAS, MCF/01/T2, MCF Resolution on the Federation Constitutional Amendments, Nov., 1957.

<sup>54</sup> See *HCD*, vol. 578, 25 Nov. 1957 cols. 808-939.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* col. 863.

<sup>56</sup> Wood, *The Welensky Papers*, p.556.

possible since the Bill's major purpose merely increased the size of Federal Assembly thereby 'decreasing African representation'.<sup>57</sup>

The championing of African rights in Parliament was not only a means by which the British left could hope to pressure the government into changing the basis of its policy in Central Africa. It was also considered as an important way in which anti-colonialists could hope to alter the basis of traditional right-wing perceptions of African nationalism. Whilst policy makers were not naïve enough to think that Africans in the Federation would remain isolated from developments in African politics elsewhere, it was widely held that genuine African nationalism had yet to take root. The expression of political discontent at this time continued to be regarded by the Conservative Party rank and file as nothing more than the articulation of discontent among the educated minority.<sup>58</sup> This was a perception fed by the colonial administration. As October 1957, officials such as Sir Robert Armitage, former Governor of Cyprus who had replaced Geoffrey Colby as Governor of Nyasaland in 1956, continued to view the Congresses as generally unrepresentative of the views of the African majority. 'The true facts', he stated, '[is] that their membership is small, and in terms of numbers their whole-hearted supporters are comparatively few. The influence wielded by Congress is out of all proportion to the paucity of its membership'.<sup>59</sup>

In sum, relatively little had changed in official circles since the early 1950s regarding attitudes towards African political development. Whilst it was generally accepted that African political aspirations would in the long term have to be

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<sup>57</sup> *HCD*, vol. 578 col. 810, 25 Nov., 1957.

<sup>58</sup> C[onservative] P[arty] A[rchives], Bodleian Library, Oxford, C[onservative] C[entral] O[ffice] 4/6/3, 'Relations between the Conservative Party and Political Parties in the Colonies', undated, 1957.

<sup>59</sup> NA, CO 1015/1748, Armitage to Lennox-Boyd, 'Problems Presented by the NAC', 4 Oct., 1957.



accommodated, there remained a general reluctance to accept that what was emerging in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was genuine African politicisation. It was still too inextricably linked with the anti-Federation struggle and simply too impatient to be considered worthy of encouragement. As Fenner Brockway remarked in April 1956, it was the intention of the MCF to challenge these views and create a 'new way of thinking' in regards to the political development of Central Africa. This would be a 'hard task', but one 'worth doing' if the Africans were granted opportunities for advancement. This would not happen overnight, Brockway added, but would be a very gradual process.<sup>60</sup>

One of the key means by which Brockway and his anti-colonial campaigners hoped to bring about the revolution in thinking towards African nationalism was to give wide publicity to African objections to the Federation. The hope was that sufficient public pressure could be brought to bear on the government to change the basis of Britain's policy, which might, in turn, help the government to recognise the legitimacy of African claims for the franchise. Between 1953 and 1958, letters to the press, petitions and pamphlets containing material written by Congress leaders circulated with monotonous regularity emphasising the right of Africans to an equal say in government in a region in which they were the majority. Stopping short of comparing the situation to South African apartheid, it was nevertheless emphasised that the failure to acknowledge the legitimacy of African objections to the way in which colonial and Federal authorities were managing African development was tantamount to Britain neglecting its responsibilities to its colonial

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<sup>60</sup> SOAS, MCF/1/T2, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held at the House of Commons, 13 Apr., 1956.

subjects.<sup>61</sup> Although not yet politically mature, African protest could with positive encouragement from the British be directed into moderate channels. As Michael Scott wrote in a carefully worded letter to the Colonial Office,

If African organisations were strong and well organised, they could turn the tide. They are not, however, and their uprising [sic.] is made difficult by government attitudes who refuse to acknowledge their existence. It is therefore only intervention from outside which can now turn the tide. Having failed to encourage 'Partnership', the UK Government has surely a strong moral and political obligation to guide Africans onto a path from which they can develop and advance.<sup>62</sup>

To continually ignore African development would result in the very thing that Britain was trying to stave off: anti-British nationalism. 'African nationalism is steadily rising', an Africa Bureau letter to the Colonial Secretary read, 'but it is not yet 'Black Nationalism'. It is still non-racial and demands only non-racial equality. If the government continues to ignore African opinion, "Black Nationalism" will follow and Partnership will not be practical possibility for much longer'.<sup>63</sup>

Attempts to bring about a greater understanding of nationalism also served as a valuable counterweight to the overwhelming pro-settler bias prevalent in government circles during the 1950s. To policy makers in London, the preservation of the delicate balance in Federation was the ultimate panacea, not least because they believed that the steady evolution of 'partnership' continued to offer the best solution for the intractable multiracial problems of southern Africa.<sup>64</sup> The success of Britain's policy goals in the region rested at least in the short-term upon the

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<sup>61</sup> For just some examples of the press statements and petitions sent to the Colonial Office, see RH, AB 231/7, 'Labour Party Press Statement on Central Africa, 27 Mar., 1958, which was circulated in widely circulated in *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Observer*, and *The Manchester Guardian*. See also SOAS, FP, PPMS 6/6/2, Petition to Commonwealth Secretary, 23 Dec., 1957.

<sup>62</sup> RH, AB 233/6, Note to the Colonial Office, Michael Scott, 20 Aug., 1957.

<sup>63</sup> RH, AB 231/7, Africa Bureau Paper to Colonial Office, 'The Situation in Central Africa', 24 Sept., 1957.

<sup>64</sup> Miller, J.D.B., *Survey of Commonwealth Affairs: Problems of Expansion and Attrition 1953-1969* (London, 1974), p.178.

preservation of settler primacy in the region. Settlers did, after all, hold all prominent economic and governmental positions in Central Africa, and as such the future prosperity of the Federation would rest entirely upon their influence. Perhaps most importantly, the extent to which Britain could share in this prosperity would depend on the perpetuation of goodwill between settlers and the British. Given the reverence for the 'imperial connection' shared between Rhodesian settlers and some sections of the British right, it was very much hoped that faith in the capacity of settlers authorities to look after African political development would in future pay dividends.<sup>65</sup> Doubts over the viability of promoting Africans were fuelled by the Federal Government, who persistently emphasised the dangers of accelerating African advancement before they had reached 'acceptable' levels of development. What the British government had to face, Welensky argued, is that the vast majority of the African population was 'still very primitive', and its leadership 'largely immature and given to extremism'. It was unlikely, given the circumstances, he continued, that Britain could hope to achieve its goals of a peaceful transition to Dominion status without the 'stabilising influence' of 'staunchly pro-British white settlers'.<sup>66</sup>

For some historians, the failure to prevent the passing of the Constitution Amendment Act in 1957 pointed to the ineffectuality of the domestic anti-

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<sup>65</sup> NA, DO 35/6827, Draft letter to the Press, 26 Feb., 1953. See also Schutt, A.K., King, T., 'The 1953 Rhodes Centenary Exhibition in Southern Rhodesia', *The Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Jun., 2005), p.365, and Murphy, P., *Party Politics and Decolonization: The Conservative Party and British Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa, 1951-1964* (Oxford, 1995) for explanations pertaining to the deep and personal connections that existed between Central African settlers and the British right. Whilst the expatriate Britons of Kenya were certainly not noted for setting a high moral tone, although there were significant differences among the settler community, their Rhodesian counterparts came much closer to the Conservative ideal of a sturdy, self-reliant God-fearing middle class.

<sup>66</sup> RH, WP 629/7, Welensky article in *Rhodesia Herald*, 16 May, 1957.

Federation campaign.<sup>67</sup> But despite failing to precipitate a far-reaching reappraisal of African development in the Federation, anti-colonialists did manage to give greater exposure to the Federation's problems. 'Although we did not succeed in our immediate aim', wrote Jane Symonds of the Africa Bureau to Kaunda, 'I think we did succeed in awakening people to some of the dangers threatening Central Africa, and therefore we can hope for better things in 1960'.<sup>68</sup>

Indicative of the success of the anti-colonial campaign was the growing sensitivity of the Federal government to the growth in popularity of anti-colonial sentiment. By 1956, for example, the Federal Intelligence and Security Bureau's Director, Bob De Quehen, wrote to Welensky expressing his fear that anti-colonial 'Fabian ideas' were beginning to gain influence in Whitehall, which in turn were having 'an adverse effect upon the friendly feelings which were once accorded to the Federation'.<sup>69</sup> David Cole, head of leading public relations firm David Cole and Partners hired by Welensky to investigate the Federation's public image, echoed De Quehen's sentiment. Rising British interest in African welfare, he warned, was likely to inhibit the chances of the Federation being granted Dominion status. Welensky and his United Federal Party could therefore expect to lose ground to the more extremist Dominion Party, which disagreed with Welensky's alleged conciliatory stance towards the Federation's African citizens at home.<sup>70</sup>

Fears over the growth of a more liberal approach to African advancement gaining ground in Britain were not entirely unfounded. By 1957, certain sections of the Conservative party, notably the Bow Group, established in 1951 as an extra-

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<sup>67</sup> Murphy, *Party Politics*, p.231.

<sup>68</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Jane Symonds to Kaunda, 4 Nov., 1957

<sup>69</sup> RH, WP 238/2, De Quehen to Welensky, 23 Oct., 1956.

<sup>70</sup> RH, WP 600/2, Cole to Welensky, undated, 1957.

parliamentary forum for young Conservatives, were beginning to advocate that African nationalism was a genuine political force in Central Africa, one that would need to be accommodated in the Federation sooner rather than later.<sup>71</sup> Given this perspective, one might legitimately ask why in 1957 there was so much support for the Constitutional Amendment Act, which appeared to all intents and purposes as a measure protecting settler interests. It is important to note, however, that many beginning to advocate a progressive approach towards African development saw the Act as going some way to improving the situation. It not only offered 'suitable' Africans the chance to participate in the franchise, but also provided opportunities for those not yet meeting the required qualifications. Most importantly, the compromise reached with settlers would reduce settler pressure for dominion status, thereby creating conditions conducive for the evolution of partnership.<sup>72</sup> This was far from representing a major alteration in government thinking towards African nationalism in the Federation, but it did signify that some within the wider Conservative party were prepared to concede that Congress demands could not be ignored if Britain hoped to achieve its goals in Central Africa.

Unsurprisingly, the role of the Labour Party and the anti-colonial movement came under frequent attack by Welensky, who lambasted their 'irresponsible' and 'careless' attitude which was serving merely to heighten African expectations and make Federation unworkable.

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<sup>71</sup> Doubts over the long-term viability of the Federation were initially framed in a report produced by a delegation of British MPs, who had visited the Federation in August and September, which noted the disparity in living standards between Africans and Europeans. See *The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: Report on a Visit by a Parliamentary Delegation* (Sept., 1957).

<sup>72</sup> Bow Group Pamphlet, *Crisis Over Central Africa: The Future of the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland and the Federal Constitution Bill*, 1957. The authors of the pamphlet, some of whom had been part of the visiting Parliamentary Delegation in 1957, suggested that the proposals should only be approved on the proviso that the Federal Government amended the franchise in order to give Africans a greater say in the selection of Ordinary Members.

What contains the seed of discontent and even danger is the easy championship by some members of the British Labour Party of each and every African 'cause', whether substantial or not and at times in complete disregard of the principles they themselves earnestly follow at home. The result is that the African is being led to believe that he need only look to London to have his wishes satisfied and it is unfortunate that in some circles in London there is no discrimination between reality and unreality in considering African aspirations.<sup>73</sup>

Sensing that not enough was being done to counter Federation's increasingly negative reputation in London, Director of the British South Africa Company Ellis Robins wrote to Welensky complaining of the weakness of Federal public relations. What was needed, he said, was a hard-hitting propaganda campaign to target the less intellectually inclined members of the Commons.<sup>74</sup> Following protracted discussions, a pro-Federal pressure group named the Rhodesia and Nyasaland Committee was established in London in May 1957.<sup>75</sup> Its primary objective was to seek to influence opinion in Britain so as to achieve 'full self-government within the Commonwealth' for the federation in as 'practicable and expedient a manner as possible'.<sup>76</sup>

### *Anti-colonial Relations with the NAC and ANC, 1956-58*

As has been shown, the task of British anti-colonialists in altering the trajectory of Federal politics was constrained by the British government's commitment to upholding the delicate racial balance in Central Africa.<sup>77</sup> Their predicament was made infinitely worse by the perception that their activities contributed to stoking the embers of tension between Africans and settlers. In 1957, for example, G.H.

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<sup>73</sup> RH, WP 238/2, Welensky to Cole, 22 Sept., 1957.

<sup>74</sup> RH, WP 272/2, Robins to Welensky, 28 Dec., 1956.

<sup>75</sup> Murphy, *Party Politics*, p.78.

<sup>76</sup> RH, WP 273/3, 'Objects and Principles of the Rhodesia and Nyasaland Committee', 21 Nov., 1957.

<sup>77</sup> Crehan, 'Tribes' and the People Who Read Books', p.211.

Baxter lambasted the publication of inflammatory statements to the press and 'unhelpful' letters to the Colonial and Commonwealth Secretaries that were 'embarrassing Ministers', 'annoying the Europeans' and 'encouraging the Congress leaders to whip up opposition in the north'.<sup>78</sup> But in spite of the criticism from individuals in Whitehall, there is no doubt that anti-colonial support was an important feature of the anti-Federation struggle. This came to be reflected in the sentimental attachment that developed between Africans and their British allies, expressed in literature and song. A particularly poignant poem entitled 'Scott the Blackman', written soon after Michael Scott's deportation from Nyasaland in 1953 by NAC member Hartwell Soloman, is symbolic of the deep and often personal connections that existed between the two groups, especially during the formative years of the Congresses.

Long live Scott / Champion of the black man; / Though you are white! / You  
are our dearest brother, / For the cause of our land.  
We had David Livingstone! / Who died on our lands, / Then Joseph Booth  
our friend, / Was deported at last, / All for the cause of an African.  
Then, what is this Federation? / That causes Inkosi Gomini, / To be  
deported and prosecuted! / Scott deported for our good cause! / Alas! Is  
this British justice  
What shall Scott say? / Saw Nyasaland Police! / Using tear gas and shooting  
at him, / And the defenceless African women; / The wrongs we bear shall be  
redressed.<sup>79</sup>

Events following the Federal Constitutional Amendment Act represented something of a turning point in the nationalist-anti-colonial relationship particularly between the Labour Party and the Congresses. Whilst anti-colonialists had raised the profile of African nationalism in the metropole, the bypassing of the African Affairs Board and the failure to prevent the 1957 constitutional changes indicated

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<sup>78</sup> NA, DO 35/7672, Minute, G.H. Baxter, 15 Mar., 1957.

<sup>79</sup> RH, AB 236/3, 'Scott the Blackman', by Hartwell Solomon, 1953.

to some Congress leaders that little was being achieved by adopting the policies advocated by their British supporters. One of the key questions confronting ANC and NAC officials, therefore, was why Africans ought to continue to frame their objections to the Federation in the context of being British 'protected persons'? As Kaunda told the Colonial Secretary in mid-1957, the British government displayed such an erroneous appraisal of the feelings of the African people that many had begun to doubt Britain's capacity to look after African interests.<sup>80</sup> As nationalists themselves gradually became more assertive, there thus emerged a quite distinct divergence of opinion and approach between the Congresses and their metropolitan allies as to how best to achieve African advancement. These differences became apparent in the decision of ANC and NAC leaders to abandon the idea of achieving gradual African advancement *within* Federation, something that most anti-colonial supporters still maintained was the best means for African progress. Secession under African majority governments within the shortest possible time was now the primary objective. Only by such means, Hastings Banda wrote to Kaunda in May 1958, could Africans achieve their freedom:

Judging from what I have seen and heard in Britain, if we stand firm, we should be able to dismantle the Federation. I get this impression, even when talking to some of the Conservative people ... I do not think your views and ours in Nyasaland are any different. I think you hold the same view as we do in Nyasaland, namely, that Federation is against our political interests and must therefore be dismantled. I have made public statements here, in which I have emphasised that you and we mean to get out of the Federation at the earliest possible time ... I hope to work in close and friendly cooperation.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> NA, CO 1015/2121, Kaunda to Lennox-Boyd, 29 Jul., 1957.

<sup>81</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/4, Hastings Banda to Kaunda, 30 May, 1958. This represented a turning point for the NAC, who before 1957 had sought to oppose Federation by 'constitutional means' by 'mobilising sections of British public opinion in support of African demands through the more extreme members of the British Labour Party'. See NA, CO 1015/1748, Nyasaland Intelligence Report for the Period Nov., 1956 to Jan., 1957.



Banda's plea for closer cooperation between the Congresses reflected the growing belief that the struggle for freedom in Nyasaland would be strengthened by uniting other anti-colonial liberation movements interested in his country's struggle.<sup>82</sup> Both Nkumbula and Kaunda shared Banda's judgement. In a joint letter to the editor of *The Times* in May 1957, they admitted to being 'distressed' at the lack of interest shown by the British people in regards to the decision of the British government to grant concessions to Welensky. This was, they argued, a prelude to apartheid, an altogether profound attempt to draw explicit links with the South African regime.<sup>83</sup> In January 1958, the ANC tentatively explored the possibility of winning support elsewhere, sending several circulars to prominent international human rights organisations, including the New York-based International League for the Rights of Man. The next two years would be decisive in determining whether Nyasaland and the Rhodesias would traverse the path of the Union of South Africa. As such, much would depend upon the influence the Congresses could bring to bear upon the situation. 'This will of necessity depend upon careful planning which cannot be done by a handful of men and women as it needs considering all walks of life', the circular stated. 'It therefore calls for interested people drawn from all those different spheres to put their heads together'.<sup>84</sup>

Congress pleas for external assistance not only indicated the extent to which the Congresses were beginning to develop a more assertive national programme, but also reflected a declining faith in the capacity of British anti-colonialists to act

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<sup>82</sup> As Kanyama Chiume, one of the NAC's most prominent organisers and African member in the Legislative Council, remarked in 1958, there emerged a sense that 'freedom is meaningless' unless it was linked with the total liberation and eventual unity of African under one continental government.

<sup>83</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Letter to the Editor of *The Times*, May, 1957.

<sup>84</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/12, Congress Circular to International League of the Rights of Man, 20 Jan., 1958.

decisively on Africans' behalf. From roughly mid-1957, Congress' metropolitan allies bemoaned the lack of information received from the Federation. 'There are never any strong demonstrations against Federation reported here', Fox-Pitt told JCM Ng'andu, ANC's Provincial Secretary in Kasama, and 'the British people are beginning to believe that there is not any real opposition to the Federation'.<sup>85</sup> John Hatch had earlier expressed similar concerns, imploring Kaunda to keep him 'fully informed' of the progress and policy of the Congress in order that pressure could be applied to the British government. 'I have not heard from you for many months now', he said, 'and so have no idea, apart from press reports, of how things are with you and your colleagues. Please do write to me immediately to give me a full picture of what is happening in Northern Rhodesia'.<sup>86</sup>

The situation materialising closely mirrors Nicholas Owens' observations in regards to British anti-colonial activities in India.<sup>87</sup> As nationalists became more determined to win self-government for themselves so they adopted vocabulary and techniques less familiar to British anti-colonialists. This new method of self-reliance had unwelcome implications for the work that the British supporters of Congress had traditionally undertaken, leading eventually to a widening gulf in their respective agendas. Whilst Congress leaders were advocating immediate African self-government, certain members of anti-colonial organisations, such as Peter Lake of the Africa Bureau, continued to argue that Africans' best interests would be served by adopting a 'restrained, tolerant and sympathetic attitude', at least until

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<sup>85</sup> SOAS, FP, PPMS 6/7/6, Fox-Pitt to Ng'andu, 10 Jul., 1958.

<sup>86</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/10, Hatch to Kaunda, 25 Jun., 1957.

<sup>87</sup> Owen, *The British Left and India*, p.153.

the Federal Constitution was up for revision in 1960. The Federation needed to be given 'a fair chance to work'.<sup>88</sup>

Whilst such views were undoubtedly influenced by the belief that Federation still offered the best solution for Central Africa's complex racial problems, there is every reason to suspect that they were also intimately related to reports of the growing militancy of Congress protest, which pointed to a lack of political experience at the top. Continued faith in the capacity of the Colonial Office to act in the interests of Africans had arguably restrained both Congresses from carrying out a more vociferous campaign against the Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland administrations. Following the deterioration in relations after 1957, however, there was a noticeable increase in Congress agitation that accompanied the respective ANC and NAC calls for full enfranchisement and secession. Reports on the spot began to paint a disturbing picture. In Northern Rhodesia, Congress was becoming ever more radical; if Africans were unable to achieve their goals by constitutional methods, it was feared that the party would soon adopt a policy of violence to achieve the desired result.<sup>89</sup> In Nyasaland, meanwhile, there had been 'no reduction in the fierceness of the opposition to the Federation since the early 1950s' and, increasingly, the Nyasaland African Congress was beginning to deploy 'violent and extreme methods' including 'intimidation, arson and violence against Europeans' to make their presence felt.<sup>90</sup> Throwing their weight behind both Congresses at this juncture was thus regarded as unrealistic by many anti-

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<sup>88</sup> RH, AB 233/5, Comments on Draft Policy Statement, Peter Lake, 14 Feb., 1957.

<sup>89</sup> NA, DO 35/4778, Northern Rhodesia African National Congress: The Action Group, an assessment, Aug., 1957.

<sup>90</sup> NA, CO 1015/1583, M.R. Metcalf, UK High Commissioner in Federation, to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 'Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: Review of 1957', 18 Mar., 1958.

colonialists, chiefly those within the Labour Party and the MCF. To have done so, Peter Lake remarked, would have been tantamount to sanctioning the rise of a form of African political extremism intolerant of the presence of the white settler community, making a clash between white and black in Central Africa a 'distinct possibility'.<sup>91</sup>

Attempts to convince Africans of the need to operate within a constitutional framework were reflected in persistent appeals to the NAC and ANC to participate in the 1958 territorial elections. Advancement *within* Federation was considered eminently more preferable than immediate self-government for the African community, a move that was likely to catalyse racial conflict.<sup>92</sup> Until at least early 1959, therefore, anti-colonial bodies persistently re-iterated the importance of 'partnership', urging the British government to encourage the Federal Government to pass legislation that would improve African advancement prospects.<sup>93</sup> In a Labour Party statement in March 1958, which appeared in several major British newspapers including *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Observer*, and *The Manchester Guardian*, for example, it was argued that Africans must be provided with 'concrete proof' that the principles of 'partnership' were being operated. Only by such means could Federation endure.<sup>94</sup>

The reluctance to support the militant stance taken by the ANC and NAC might have primarily been geared towards preventing racial conflict, but it also owed much to domestic political considerations. For many Labour MPs it would

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<sup>91</sup> RH, AB 233/5, Comments on Draft Policy Statement, Peter Lake, 14 Feb., 1957.

<sup>92</sup> NA, DO 35/5348, Lennox-Boyd to Benson, 8 Aug., 1958. Lennox-Boyd informs Benson that James Johnson appealed to Africans of Northern Rhodesia to participate in the forthcoming elections.

<sup>93</sup> See for example RH, FCB 108/2, 'Resolutions on Federation', 27 Apr., 1957, 106/1, 'Draft Africa Bureau Statement on Federation', undated. 1958.

<sup>94</sup> RH, AB 231/7, 'Labour Party Press Statement on Central Africa, 27 Mar., 1958.

have been potentially problematic for the Party to have committed to a secessionist policy in the Federation lest its room for manoeuvre be restricted in Central Africa should it win the next British General Election, scheduled for 1959. As Arthur Creech Jones stated, Labour's policy needed to remain as flexible as possible so as not to alarm or isolate either African or settler opinion.<sup>95</sup> To abstain from making a policy declaration was in the interests of all concerned, and it was upon this basis that Labour's attitude to the Constitutional Review Conference in 1960 would be decided.<sup>96</sup> Some within the Party disagreed with Labour's official stance. One of the most vocal opponents was Anthony Wedgwood Benn, MP for Bristol and active member of the MCF, who believed that 'a specific timetable' ought to be worked out for the transfer of power so as to 'achieve a psychological revolution' and 'set the people free to work towards its realisation'.<sup>97</sup>

Labour's refusal to put secession on the agenda for 1960, or make any statements pertaining to it, certainly bought the Party a degree of leverage, but it curtailed the capacity of the anti-colonial movement to speak freely against the Federation. At the same, it compromised the Party's relations with Africans of the northern territories. Frank Chitambala of the ANC even went so far as to suggest in 1958 that collaboration with the Labour Party had been a 'monstrous waste of time' and that Labour's colonial policies were no different from those of the Conservative government.<sup>98</sup> As Kanyama Chiume of the NAC wrote in *Venture*, Labour's attitude not only revealed the contradictions inherent in 'an attempt to

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<sup>95</sup> RH, FCB 107/3, Creech Jones, 'Notes for Central African Pamphlet', undated, 1958.

<sup>96</sup> LHA, LPA, CSC.55/79, Statement of the NEC, Mar., 1958.

<sup>97</sup> Benn, T., *Years of Hope: Diaries, Papers and Letters 1940-1962*, (London, 1994), p.216.

<sup>98</sup> RH, AB 249/7, Frank Chitambala, 'A National Appeal to Black Youths of Northern Rhodesia', 6 Aug., 1958.

rationalise a bad scheme', but also a 'lack of principle'. If Labour knew the Federation is bad, he asked, 'why wait for a crisis before secession can be considered?'<sup>99</sup> Disappointed as he was, Chiume believed that growing African scepticism over Labour's involvement in Central African affairs had much to do with Labour's initial role in the formation of Federation.

We are not blind to the facts of history. Africans are aware of the fact that the Labour Party encouraged the sentiments for federation among Europeans in CA ... It was also during the time of the government formed by the Labour Party that Nkrumah was imprisoned, India was partitioned and that the party scorned Dr Jagan who has now been returned to power again by his people.<sup>100</sup>

Although both Sir Ungoed-Thomas and Sir John Hatch were perhaps right, therefore, when they said that Africans looked to Labour for guidance, this was not 'a blind gaze at the horizon'.<sup>101</sup>

The Congress programme for self-government was not entirely unsupported by British anti-colonialists, however. For those individuals who regularly engaged first-hand with African nationalist leaders, such as Michael Scott and Thomas Fox-Pitt, both of whom had a deep understanding of the working of Central African politics, it was important that Africans were given the opportunity to determine their own future. Given that the combined acts of the British and Federal governments had 'finally alienated' African opinion in the Federation, Scott told T.F. Betts, Secretary of the FCB, anti-colonialists ought to support, rather than direct, the African anti-Federation campaign.<sup>102</sup> If anti-colonialists were to continue to positively influence the course of events in Central Africa, they needed to adopt a

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<sup>99</sup> Chiume, W., 'Nyasaland and the Federation', *Venture*, Nov., 1957.

<sup>100</sup> RH, FCB 105/5, Chimue, 'The Nyasaland Protectorate and the Labour Party', 23 Aug., 1957.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> RH, FCB 107/3 Scott to Betts, 26 Feb., 1958.

flexible approach and accept 'unconstitutional' protest as part of a necessary transition in nationalist politics. As Fox-Pitt argued, British anti-colonialists could not expect Congress activists to conform to moderate, 'western' ideals in their respective anti-Federation campaigns.

We must be sure when we say that we stand on the side of the Africans that we accept their acts of resistance as inevitable. We must genuinely prefer resistance to acceptance of subordination. We may wish that it should be non-violent but it may not go that way and it is a cheat to say that we accept resistance only if it is peaceful. If we accept the rightness of the African cause we must hope for resistance, because it is only through African resistance that the authorities will take African protests as real ... We must then accept resistance and accept the possibility of violence and we must respect those who go beyond moderation.<sup>103</sup>

It was arguably this acceptance of more extreme forms of protest that encouraged many of the ANC's metropolitan supporters to look favourably upon the formation of the Zambian African National Congress after the split in the ANC's leadership in October 1958. Simon Zukas for one, exiled to Britain in 1953 for his activities in organising the ANC campaign against Federation, believed that ZANC's entry onto the political scene provided an opportunity to form a more 'dynamic, organised movement capable of legitimately claiming a role for Africans in government'. He hoped, therefore, that ZANC's friends could help them a good deal in the party's formative years.<sup>104</sup> Fox-Pitt echoed Zukas' conclusions. 'ZANC's split from the ANC marks a more serious movement within Northern Rhodesian politics', he told Hilda Selwyn-Clarke on 6 December. 'I have long thought Kenneth the sort of committed man needed to hold things together after [Harry Nkumbula's] collapse as a popular leader'.<sup>105</sup> ZANC's entry on the political stage was thus

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<sup>103</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 22, PPMS 6/10/5, Fox-Pitt, 'The Present and Future Crisis in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland', undated. 1958.

<sup>104</sup> SOAS, FPP Box 14, PPMS 6/7/6, Zukas to Fox-Pitt, 21 Dec., 1958.

<sup>105</sup> RH, FCB 103/2, Fox-Pitt to Hilda Selwyn Clarke, Secretary of the FCB, 6 Dec., 1958.

regarded as a positive development, one that would be vital in paving a new course for Africans in the Federation.

It was not always certain, however, that Kaunda would inherit Nkumbula's position as *the* leader of the African independence movement in Northern Rhodesia. In 1956, for instance, Fox-Pitt wrote that Dixon Konkola, rather than Kaunda, was the only real rival to Nkumbula for the leadership of Congress.<sup>106</sup> What, then, proved vital in turning the tables decisively in Kaunda's favour, and why were British anti-colonialists prepared to seemingly abandon support for the ANC's liberal-democratic agenda in favour of a more radical nationalist programme? Much, of course, was dependent upon the internal dynamics of African politics. Konkola, for his part, experienced somewhat of a personal collapse in mid-1957, having been removed from the Congress executive and resigning from his position as President of the Railway African Workers Union [RAWU]. But what set Kaunda apart from his political rivals was his own political rhetoric, which stood in stark contrast to that of the ANC which had in recent times become stagnant under Nkumbula's guidance. This was apparent, Kaunda suggested, in Nkumbula's decision to leave London on the evening before the ANC leaders were due to hold seminal talks with the Colonial Secretary over Northern Rhodesia's constitution. ZANC represented progress, not stagnation. Kaunda himself went to great personal lengths to play up his differences with the ANC's president, sending several letters to his friends in London in December 1958 offering a detailed discussion of what he viewed as Nkumbula's political mistakes, a man that had brought the nationalist

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<sup>106</sup> SOAS, FP, Box 13, 6/7/3, Fox-Pitt letter, undated but 1956.



movement 'to a standstill'.<sup>107</sup> Kaunda's approach paid off. It was telling, for instance, that Kaunda's arguments were echoed in correspondence between British anti-colonialists, who equally lamented Nkumbula's failings.

Contrary to the views of scholars such as Howe and Owen, both of whom suggest that anti-colonialists by the late 1950s were of declining importance to nationalists, Kaunda's actions point to the value African leaders attached to winning external approval from metropolitan groups sympathetic to the African plight.<sup>108</sup> Whilst ideological differences still existed, they were clearly not seen as an insuperable barrier to a productive relationship during times of need. In late 1958, ZANC leaders were in a vulnerable position, the future was uncertain. In order to legitimise the decision to split from the ANC and ensure that he, rather than his rival, was regarded as *the* key figure in Northern Rhodesian African national politics in British anti-colonial and government circles, Kaunda was keen to put himself in the position of the ANC's natural heir. Certain ideological differences would of course remain over the ways in which the Federation could be dismantled, but African leaders would continue to look towards the metropole for inspiration. The anti-Federation campaign could not be won in isolation. As will be shown in chapter six, these connections would prove vital in sustaining momentum behind the nationalist movement throughout 1959 following the banning of ZANC and the NAC.

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<sup>107</sup> RH, AB 245/16, Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec., 1958. Gewald, J-B., Hinfelaar, M., Macola, G., (eds.) *Living the End of Empire*. See Macola's chapter 'The Formation of ZANC/UNIP', pp.14-41.

<sup>108</sup> See for instance, Owen, *The British Left and India*, Howe, *Anti-colonialism* and Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics 1945-1961*.

## *Conclusion*

Given the apparent failure of both the Labour Party and the anti-colonial left to alter decisively the trajectory of the British government's policy in the Central Africa Federation, the belief has prevailed that anti-colonialists had a minimal impact upon colonial affairs. The intention of this chapter has been to provide a necessary corrective to these trends, firstly, to suggest that the development of African politics depended heavily upon external support between 1953 and 1958, and secondly, to propose that the success of the anti-colonial struggle ought not to be determined by focussing solely upon their metropolitan activities.

Between 1953 and 1958, anti-colonialists not only provided nationalists with moral and financial support at a critical moment in their history, but helped also to elevate the status of the Congresses, identifying them as *the* representatives of African political opinion with whom the British government would have to negotiate in discussions over Federation's future. As Kaunda later remarked in an interview with Harold Channer, the support given to his party at this time gave Africans a voice in Britain that would otherwise have remained unheard. 'In those days', he said, 'it was not easy to go to Britain and appeal to the British people over the heads of the British government'.<sup>109</sup> By campaigning on behalf of the Africans in Central Africa, anti-colonialists demonstrated that African nationalism was almost certainly not politically immature and was far from representing the views of only the educated elite; African nationalism was a growing force, beginning to win widespread support for its anti-colonial programme.

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<sup>109</sup> Kaunda interview with Harold Channer, Tripoli, 1997, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqBLb4w7BqU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqBLb4w7BqU), accessed 12 Mar., 2011.

As nationalists became more assertive in the later 1950s, they found anti-colonial restraint and sympathy towards the ultimate aim of 'partnership' incompatible with their own goals for African majority government and secession. Whilst this gave rise to ideological differences between anti-colonialists and nationalists, it did not create an irreparable split in anti-colonial-nationalist relations. As evidenced by the attempts of ZANC's leaders to appeal to anti-colonial sensibilities in late 1958, nationalists would continue to look to the metropole for assistance even when there appeared to be a divergence in how Africans could best achieve political advancement. This indicated, above all, that close connections continued to exist between the Congresses and their British allies and, crucially, points to the importance of the anti-colonialists in helping to facilitate nationalist development in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The intention here has not been to attribute so large a phenomenon as the rapid growth of African nationalism in the later fifties to any cause external to Africa, but, given the extent to which anti-colonialists had helped raise the profile of nationalist leaders and more widely the anti-Federation struggle, it is hoped that a case has been made to incorporate the British anti-colonial perspective into the nationalist narrative.

# 4

## *African Nationalism and the Transition to Independence in Nyasaland, 1959-64*

The period 1959-64 represented a critical phase in the history of the Federation. The intention of the following two chapters is to account for the rise of mass nationalism in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia during this period. An attempt will be made to account for the reasons why, having been dismissed by the authorities before 1959 as representing but a small minority of African opinion, the governments of Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Britain came to regard African political advancement as essential to progress and stability in Central Africa. Part of the reason lay in the rapid development of African politics, and the extent to which nationalist leaders were successful in building a truly 'national' programme that captured the minds of the African majority, giving rise to the belief that Africans could no longer be excluded from the decision making process.

As chapter two suggested, whilst the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC], African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia [ANC] and later Zambia African National Congress [ZANC] leaders had made relevant the implications of African membership of the Federation at grass roots, their respective 'local' mobilisation campaigns made difficult the construction of a unified 'national' movement. Re-

building Congress prestige by exploiting local grievances was simply too reliant upon the strength of anti-government sentiment at local level to stimulate widespread interest in the anti-Federation campaign. It also caused uneven political development, creating friction within both parties as competing factions rivalled one another for leadership of the anti-Federation struggle. This precipitated, in Northern Rhodesia, the infamous ANC-ZANC split in October 1958. The events of 1959 provided somewhat of an impetus for change; in 1959 Africans everywhere had 'experienced the state'.<sup>1</sup> For the first time Congress leaders could point to a tangible manifestation of state suppression and what the future was likely to entail for Africans if Federation remained unchallenged. What was needed, therefore, was a national appeal, a programme to which all Africans could subscribe irrespective of ethno-regional or socio-economic differences. Chapters four and five will shed light on the ways and means by which first the leaders of the Malawi Congress Party [MCP] in Nyasaland and then the United National Independence Party in Northern Rhodesia [UNIP] were able to build and then win support for their respective national vision. This chapter will focus upon Nyasaland, chapter five will focus upon Northern Rhodesia. Together, they will contribute to the historiography by shedding much needed light on the methods used by both parties to mobilise Africans and how they subsequently became, by the early 1960s, *the* representatives of the African majority. Crucially, they will also seek to explain the evolution of the national programme.

Whilst recent accounts, such as Joey Power's *Building Kwacha*, and the edited collection of essays on Zambia, *Living the End of Empire: Politics and Society*

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with John Mwanse, former agricultural union official and MCP activist in the 1960s in Northern Province, Zomba, 28 Aug., 2011.

*in Late Colonial Zambia*, have done much to advance our understanding of the nationalist struggle, re-integrating previously marginalised groups into the nationalist narrative, many questions pertaining to the development of African nationalism, that is, a belief in a greater Zambia and Malawi and the desire to achieve independence for the respective nations, remain unanswered.<sup>2</sup> How, for instance, did nationalist politicians *mobilise* the African masses? What methods were used to win the support of the politically uneducated and how did this alter the MCP-UNIP political programme and their vision of what new nationhood would entail for the people of Zambia and Malawi? Chapters four and five will endeavour to answer these important questions, emphasising the centrality of nationalist leaders in cultivating a political programme to which a wide variety of disparate interest groups could respond.

But although nationalist leaders had by roughly 1961 succeeded in stimulating a greater consciousness of what new nationhood would entail for Africans, inherent problems rose to the fore when the fight against Federation was nearing its end. Given that the nationalist campaign had initially been conceived as a protest *against* Federation, how did MCP-UNIP leaders adjust when the fight for independence had been won? For the MCP and UNIP, a new focus for agitation was needed. For the MCP, new political rivals were to be found within the party itself. With independence on the horizon, it was imperative that absolute unity prevailed, that those dissenting voices who disagreed with President Hastings Banda's growing hold over the MCP were silenced in order to ensure the continued dominance of the MCP over the national agenda. In Northern Rhodesia, it was the

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<sup>2</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, Gewald, Hinfelaar, Macola, (eds.) *Living the End of Empire*.

continued existence of Harry Nkumbula's ANC, in spite of its alleged financial and administrative weakness, that provided a constant source for discontent. After the formation of the UNIP-ANC coalition government in late 1962, the ANC became public enemy number one, the party's presence threatening both UNIP's position as the main representative for African affairs in Northern Rhodesia and, critically, UNIP's claim to represent the Zambian 'nation'. In both cases, the tendency towards violence created a climate in which tension, fear and suspicion thrived. Ultimately, it served to undermine the very premise upon which nationalism had been conceived: unity and equality for all.

The entrenchment of inter and intra-party violence was a poignant symbol of the ways in which nationalism and political mobilisation had evolved. Paradoxically, it not only came to replace more traditional methods as a means of popular mobilisation but it also worked to the benefit of those struggling for national independence. Rather than causing the British to reconsider its chosen course of action for the Federation, it convinced many within Whitehall that to hold together the Federation was likely to precipitate a complete breakdown of civil order. The response to nationalist agitation was thus to negotiate with nationalist leaders, a policy that fuelled extremist tendencies. Africans came to believe that 'violence pays'.<sup>3</sup> It is unclear whether the decision to grant rights of secession to UNIP and the MCP was motivated by a desire to disassociate Britain from the problems caused by the Federation and the failure to promote African advancement, or whether there genuinely existed an acceptance that the Federation had failed. What is clear, however, is that in failing to recognise the

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<sup>3</sup> NA, CO 1015/2057, E. Leighton, Assistant Commissioner Special Branch, Northern Rhodesia, 'An Assessment of the Current and Future Threat to the Security of the Territory', 17 Oct., 1959.

extent of African political development in 1953, the British had created a popular force in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, imbued with its own centrality to the future of the nation and quite unprepared to consider anything less than full independence and secession. Before such issues are examined, however, it is crucial to establish the context in which these developments took place.

### *Britain, Settlers and the Development of African Nationalism in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, 1958-64*

By late 1958, Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were becoming increasingly impatient. African leaders had failed in their attempts to negotiate measures for African advance and with the Federal Review Conference on the horizon, at which it was anticipated Welensky would achieve his long-held ambition of dominion status for the Federation, an element of desperation began to pervade African politics. It was at this time that the leaders of the NAC, the ANC and the newly formed ZANC travelled to Accra, Ghana, for the first All African People's Conference in December.<sup>4</sup> Galvanised by the support of influential pan-African figures, NAC and ZANC leaders returned to their respective territories with renewed optimism. Plans were soon established to organise a more concerted attack on the Federation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> RH, WP 242/5, 'An Assessment of the External Influence Affecting the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland', 8 May, 1959. Special Branch surmised that all Congress movements within the Federation were greatly heartened and stimulated by the Accra Conference and were given the feeling of being part of some irresistible force'. The exception was the Northern Rhodesia ANC whose leader, Nkumbula, complained of being 'shunned' by Nkrumah and Hastings Banda in favour of the more dynamic Kaunda.

<sup>5</sup> RH, WP 231/5, George Loft, American Friends Service Committee, 'Report on the Accra Conference', 23 Dec., 1958.



The early months of 1959 were punctuated by Congress-inspired unrest, especially in Nyasaland where frustration had continued to mount following the publication of constitutional proposals set out by Governor Sir Robert Armitage which fell far short of African expectations for an elected majority in the Legislative Council.<sup>6</sup> The situation reached a climax in early February, when Philip Finney, head of the Nyasaland Special Branch, reported that senior NAC members had plotted during a 'meeting in the bush' on 25 January to murder senior government officials and initiate a programme of violence.<sup>7</sup> Suffice to say that the perception of the breakdown of order in Nyasaland in early 1959, coupled with the pressure placed upon Armitage by Federal Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky, anxious to see a clampdown on African extremism, caused the Governor to take decisive action.<sup>8</sup> On 3 March Armitage declared a state of emergency and, under 'Operation Sunrise', 1,322 arrests were made including those of NAC President Dr Hastings Banda and his lieutenants, Henry Chipembere, Kanyama Chiume, Orton Chirwa, and brothers Dunduza and Yatuta Chisiza.<sup>9</sup> According to the subsequent commission of inquiry,

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<sup>6</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa', p. lxx. Under Armitage's proposals, only 14 of the 29 members of the Legislative Council would be elected.

<sup>7</sup> MNA, C[entral] A[frican] A[rchives], Mfilm 2072, F248 CAC/155/3/C(Int)/G(ops), Vol., 1, Director of Federal Intelligence Special Branch in Salisbury to Principal Private Secretary to Prime Minister, Secretary for External Affairs, Secretary Home Affairs, Secretary Federal Treasury, Undersecretary for Defences, 18 Feb., 1959.

<sup>8</sup> Colin Baker's *State of Emergency: Crisis in Central Africa, Nyasaland 1959-1960*, (London, 1997), undoubtedly remains one of the most comprehensive and detailed analyses of the events leading up to, and immediately preceding the declaration of emergency in Nyasaland. See also Murphy, P., 'A Police State? The Nyasaland Emergency and Colonial Intelligence', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol., 36, No., 4, (December 2010), pp.265-280. For a more recent account, see McCracken, J., 'In the Shadow of Mau Mau: Detainees and Detention Camps during Nyasaland's State of Emergency', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37:3, (2011) pp.535-550.

<sup>9</sup> Cmnd. 814, *Report of the Nyasaland Commission of Inquiry*, 16, Jul., 1959.

the Nyasaland government's actions resulted in the death of 51 Africans and the wounding of at least 79 between 20 February and 19 March.<sup>10</sup>

Events in Nyasaland had a profound effect on the political temperature in Northern Rhodesia. Concerned that the NAC 'murder plot' was part of wider coordinated strategy, Governor Arthur Benson took similarly tough measures against the Zambia African National Congress, which he regarded as more radical and less amenable to cooperation than Nkumbula's ANC. Of particular concern was the extent to which ZANC's campaign against government attempts to register African voters for the forthcoming elections to be held under the controversial Benson constitution was yielding great success.<sup>11</sup> Targets set by the Government for voter registration fell far short of initial expectations. Whilst zealous efforts had brought an increase in African 'special' voters to 6,821, only 796 Africans were registered on the 'ordinary' role. With the election set for 20 March, and ZANC threatening to continue its boycott at the polls, Benson came under increasing pressure to deal with the situation at hand. On 11 March, the Safeguard of Elections and Public Safety Regulations were issued.<sup>12</sup> ZANC leaders were arrested and, in the early hours of 12 March, were sent into internal exile in remote rural bomas. Under section 21 of the Societies Ordinance, banning orders were issued against the party

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<sup>10</sup> RH, DCP Box 5, Nyasaland Operations Committee reports. It does not quite do justice to the sheer scale of the security clampdown to simply mention the numbers of those either killed or seriously wounded during the emergency. Box 5 of the Devlin Commission papers contains numerous reports detailing the frankly astonishing nature of repression that went on during this time. The most disturbing incident occurred at Nkata Bay, in which twenty Africans, in a crowd of over 600, were shot by security forces for not dispersing after the Riot Act had been read. See, 'Report on Incident at Nkata Bay', 3 Mar., 1959.

<sup>11</sup> *Northern News*, 10 Mar., 1959.

<sup>12</sup> RH, AB 245/16, Broadcast by the Governor of Northern Rhodesia, 12 Mar., 1959.

and its branches outlawed.<sup>13</sup> To all intents and purposes the governments of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had eradicated popular nationalism.

The episode of coordinated repression, which appeared to have been conducted with the assistance of Federal authorities, did much to damage Britain's reputation. The findings of the Devlin Commission, set up by the Conservative government after a public outcry to investigate the causes of the Nyasaland disturbances, were published in the infamous Devlin Report in July 1959. Its conclusions were 'uniformly bad', wrote Armitage, making embarrassing reference to the 'police state' operating in Nyasaland during the emergency.<sup>14</sup> Occurring at the same time as revelations of brutality at the Hola detention camp in Kenya, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan initially feared the Report would bring down his government. Now was the time he felt, that Britain ought to take a more proactive stance by encouraging African advancement. Two major developments in late 1959 pointed to a change of tact. The first came upon the appointment of the Monckton Commission, chaired by Sir Walter Monckton, in October 1959 to review the constitution of the Federation prior to the Federal Review Conference.<sup>15</sup> The second came soon after the Conservative Party victory in the British General Election in the same month, when Iain Macleod was appointed to the position of Colonial Secretary.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike his predecessors, Macleod came to office with a specific remit to accelerate colonial independence. As he later admitted in his memoirs, Macmillan

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> RH, A[rmitage] P[apers], Box 2, File 4, Memoirs, 1959.

<sup>15</sup> *HCD* vol. 612, cc.668-809, 2 Nov., 1959. Macleod set out the objectives of the Monckton Commission during a Parliamentary Debate on 2 November, 1959.

<sup>16</sup> See, Palmer, R., 'European Resistance to African Majority Rule, The Settlers' and Residents' Association of Nyasaland, 1960-63', *African Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 288 (Jul., 1973), p.259.

'knew very well', and indeed 'it was implicit in the offer' that he was going to operate a different regime to his predecessor. His initial objective in Central Africa was to end the emergency in Nyasaland and release Dr Banda.<sup>17</sup> Whilst there would be security risks, there was no other way to circumvent the present deadlock in Nyasaland. If the newly formed Malawi Congress Party had their hopes for Banda's release disappointed, the authorities must be prepared for 'a return to violence'.<sup>18</sup> After a series of protracted negotiations, arrangements were made to reduce the number of detainees to a 'hardcore' of around 50, further reduced to around a dozen during April. Banda was released from Gwelo gaol on 1 April, 1960. He was then flown to Nyasaland and promptly driven to Government House, Zomba, where he met Macleod and Armitage to discuss the Nyasaland constitution and to arrange a constitutional conference to be held in London from 20 July to 5 August. At the London Conference, agreement was reached for an introduction of an African elected majority in the territory's Legislative Council, elections for which were scheduled to take place the following year.<sup>19</sup>

To concur with Philip Murphy's assessment, 1959 was a seminal year for the Africans of Nyasaland. Before the emergency, Hastings Banda was generally seen by the Nyasaland and British authorities as representing a small cohort of ambitious, self-seeking political activists. After the emergency he was recognised as the undisputed leader of a committed mass movement that had the support of almost

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<sup>17</sup> NA, PREM 11/2586, Macleod to Macmillan, 29 Dec., 1959.

<sup>18</sup> NA, CO 1015/2233, Colonial Office Memo, undated, 1960. The MCP was initially set up in September 1959 under the stewardship of Orton Chirwa and an exiled Southern Rhodesian, Aleke Banda. The MCP continued to hold Banda in the highest esteem and the party's leaders had every intention upon installing him as their leader once he was released from detention.

<sup>19</sup> Cmnd. 1132, *Report of the Nyasaland Constitutional Conference*, July, 1960.

the entire African populace.<sup>20</sup> On 15 August 1961, Banda's Malawi Congress Party won an overwhelming victory in the territorial elections, taking the entire lower roll and three of the higher roll seats, which later became five when the new government was appointed on 2 September.<sup>21</sup> The major question was now how long before the MCP could lead Nyasaland's secession from the Federation.

Constitutional progress for Africans in Northern Rhodesia remained fraught with complications. The situation in the Protectorate in 1960 was especially volatile; the actions of the government in early 1959 had merely ensured a brief hiatus for nationalist politics, and soon after the (re)-organisation of former ZANC activists under the banner of the United National Independence Party [UNIP] in October 1959, political agitation intensified. The months of August and September had been punctuated with violence, culminating in the murder of a European woman, Lilian Burton, whose car was stoned and set alight whilst she and her children were still inside.<sup>22</sup> The root cause of the unrest, concluded intelligence officials, was the UNIP, formed from the embers of ZANC in October 1959, whose leaders had been active in 'exciting' and 'inciting' its followers since Kaunda had been released from detention in January 1960. The growth of ever more extreme forms of protest, officials claimed, was the mounting frustration at the failure of the Northern Rhodesian government to recognise the strength of African political sentiment.<sup>23</sup>

African expectations for political advance were boosted by the publication of the

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<sup>20</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa', p.lxi.

<sup>21</sup> The extremely poor performance of the United Federal Party under the leadership of Michael Blackwood made the allocation of seats on the Executive Council a sensitive issue. The UFP were eventually offered only one of the five elected seats. Blackwood rejected this, leaving the way open for the MCP to occupy all five

<sup>22</sup> All three initially escaped from the burning vehicle, though Mrs. Burton later died in Ndola Hospital from the injuries sustained in the attack.

<sup>23</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Intelligence Extract, 'The African Nationalist Problem in Northern Rhodesia', 29 Oct., 1960.

Monckton Report on 11 October 1960, which recommended that steps towards an African majority ought soon to be taken if the Federation had any chance of gaining African acceptance.<sup>24</sup>

Plans to reach a settlement consistent with Monckton's recommendations were complicated by the intransigent attitude of the Federal government. In December, Macleod outlined a tentative plan to offer 'the appearance of an African majority'. In a Legislative Council of 30 elected members, there might be 16 African and 14 European representatives, with a speaker and perhaps 4 officials. When put to Welensky, the plan was rejected outright.<sup>25</sup> After a series of tedious negotiations, agreement was finally reached in June 1961. Under the scheme, there would be 45 members of the legislative assembly, 15 elected by the upper roll, 15 by the lower roll and 15 by both rolls combined. The percentage of votes cast by each roll would be averaged, something that would, in practice, devalue the votes of the far more numerous and largely African lower roll. In every respect the proposals worked to the advantage of the European electorate and gave the impression that the British had once again allowed Welensky to dictate the pace of negotiations.<sup>26</sup> The introduction of a Special National constituency for Asian and Coloured voters, most of who would qualify under the higher franchise, severely diminished the prospects of nationalist parties securing upper roll support in the National constituencies. UNIP angrily condemned the June proposals as a sell out to the Federal government

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<sup>24</sup> Cmnd. 1148, *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland*, October, 1960.

<sup>25</sup> NA, PREM 11/3485, Welensky to Macmillan, 14 Jan., 1961.

<sup>26</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa', p.lxxxiv, European influence was strengthened by the creation of an Asian seat, designed to keep 2000 Asians off the upper roll, and the stipulation that, as well as securing 12½ per cent of 400 votes, whichever was less, of the votes cast by both rolls, successful candidates in national seats would also have to obtain 20 per cent of the votes of either the upper or lower roll. In every respect the June changes worked to the advantage of the UFP without yielding a similar advantage to African parties.

and in July serious rioting broke out across the territory.<sup>27</sup> Anxious to prevent the situation from getting out of hand, Macleod invited Kaunda for talks in London in mid-September, promising that the British would consider further representations on the June constitution, provided that the disturbances ceased immediately.<sup>28</sup>

In October 1961, Reginald Maudling replaced Macleod at the Colonial Office. Despite facing opposition from the Federal government, in February 1962 he succeeded in lowering the voting qualifications for Africans sufficient to secure African nationalist participation in the elections to be held later that year.<sup>29</sup> Following months of campaigning by UNIP, and a series of negotiations and temporary alliances arranged by Nkumbula to secure the ANC's continued survival, the conclusion of the second round of elections in December heralded a significant victory for African nationalism. UNIP obtained 14 seats, the ANC 7, and Welensky's United Federal Party [UFP] 16. The formation of the UNIP-ANC coalition government quashed any lingering expectations that some form of Federal association between the Rhodesias might be preserved.<sup>30</sup>

Secession was the core issue on the agenda in 1962. The attitude of Hastings Banda, who had won the 1961 elections on a secessionist platform, was uncompromising: Nyasaland would not consider any form of association, either formal or informal, with the Rhodesias. In October, R.A. Butler, recently appointed

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<sup>27</sup> NA, CO 1015/2246, Hone to Macleod, Report on Situation in Northern Rhodesia, 30 Sept., 1961.

<sup>28</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.200.

<sup>29</sup> NA, CAB 128/36/1, CC 17(62)5, 27 Feb., 1962.

<sup>30</sup> In October and November 1962, the Cabinet had not yet been prepared to discard all hope of a Central African entity. Home argued that Federation was a sound concept, and the formal political association between the territories was the only means by which Southern Rhodesia could be prevented from aligning with South Africa. Duncan Sandys, in contrast, thought political association impossible. The two Rhodesias would vehemently disagree about external affairs and defence, critical elements of any political association. An economic association, along the lines of the East African common services organisation might be possible and beneficial, however.

as the Minister for Central Africa at the newly created Central Africa Office, reluctantly acknowledged that Britain's capacity to influence a change in attitude in Nyasaland was 'extremely limited'.<sup>31</sup> Despite resistance from Welensky, Butler was convinced of the need to take the initiative lest Britain be forced to hold Nyasaland in the Federation against the declared wishes of the African people.<sup>32</sup> In deference to the objections of the Federal government, the Nyasaland constitutional conference took place in December in advance of a formal acknowledgement by the British of Nyasaland's right to secede. Over the next six months, the final stages of the British government's abdication were, Welensky later reflected, 'rapid and shameless'.<sup>33</sup> Whilst the MCP prepared for the transition to independence, eventually to be achieved on 6 July 1964, Butler later acknowledged, after lengthy discussions, the right of Northern Rhodesia to secede on 29 March 1963.<sup>34</sup>

A conference, held at Victoria Falls in summer 1963, divided up the Federation's assets among its three constituents. The news was greeted with relief in Northern Rhodesia, where inter-party violence and friction within the coalition had become a common feature of daily political life. Preparations for the forthcoming general election, scheduled for January 1964, following UNIP's request for a new constitution that provided for an expanded African franchise, began in earnest. UNIP launched a territory-wide campaign to register African voters and made a renewed appeal to encourage European support for the party. Undoubtedly aided by the ANC's financial and administrative meltdown, UNIP coasted to victory, winning 69.9 per cent of the votes cast, securing 55 of the 65 seats in the territorial

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<sup>31</sup> NA, CO 129/11, C(62)167, Cabinet memorandum by R.A. Butler, 25 Oct., 1962.

<sup>32</sup> NA, CAB/129/111, Cabinet memorandum by R.A. Butler, 25 Oct., 1962.

<sup>33</sup> Welensky, *4000 Days*, p.355.

<sup>34</sup> Murphy, 'Central Africa', p. lxxxv



legislature.<sup>35</sup> As soon as UNIP's majority was confirmed, the Governor invited Kaunda to form a new government. At the end of the year, the Federation was formally terminated, Northern Rhodesia achieving its long awaited independence as Zambia on 24 October, 1964.

### *The Nyasaland Emergency and the Proscription of Congress in Nyasaland, 1959-1960*

As outlined above, the growth of the Nyasaland African Congress reached unprecedented levels in the late 1950s. Given the frustration then building among Africans in the territory, the All-African People's Conference therefore took place at a critical moment. Calling upon the British to take decisive action and dissolve the 'discriminatory Federation in the benefit of all people [sic.]', the Conference reinvigorated the anti-Federation struggle. Resolving to support Congress leaders in 'any way possible', and pledging to support the adoption of violent tactics 'in retaliation to exploitation and subjugation', African politicians emerged with the feeling of being part of some 'irresistible force', a belief that 'their time had come'.<sup>36</sup> As Hastings Banda remarked to his followers soon after the Conference,

I was always determined to fight Federation but I am now even more determined now since I have come back from Ghana. I went to a conference of All African people. There we were Africans from everywhere, East, West, North, South and Central. We not only got to know each other but we thought together. We dreamed together. We planned together. So

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<sup>35</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.327.

<sup>36</sup> RH, WP 242/5, 'An Assessment of the External Influences Affecting the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland', 8 May, 1959. Before returning home on 28 December, for instance, Hastings Banda spent two days in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. Writing to Thomas Fox-Pitt, Banda observed a remarkable difference in Southern Rhodesian Africans, whom he had previously derided as 'Capricorns'. There was a 'noticeable change' in the attitude of Southern Rhodesians towards the struggle, he said, 'who appeared more committed and more sincere than ever to remove Federation'. See RH AB 241/1, Banda to Fox-Pitt, 30 December 1958.

that whatever happened now, we are not alone. We have the whole black and brown Africa behind us.<sup>37</sup>

Developments in late 1958 were accompanied by a discernible increase in political agitation in Nyasaland.<sup>38</sup> In the Northern Province, where the NAC drew the bulk of its support, Congress activists stepped up campaigns linking discriminatory agricultural legislation to the 'stupid Federation'. Federation meant land alienation, increased immigration and harsh agricultural rules.<sup>39</sup> In Misuku, Congress attacked soil conservation measures, arguing that they represented yet further limitations to African freedom whilst in Karonga, one of the major cattle areas of the country, Congress told cattle owners to ignore irksome legislation forcing them to register their animals with the Veterinary Department and to stay away from dipping tanks.<sup>40</sup> In each case Congress went to great lengths to emphasise that under a Congress government such legislation would be withdrawn immediately and Africans would again be permitted to cultivate their own land as they saw appropriate. As R.W. Kettlewell, Nyasaland's Director of Agriculture, confirmed, the Congress campaign was largely successful. Widespread boycotts of agricultural rules followed and soon gave rise to the destruction of government property and intimidation of agricultural officials.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> NA, CO 1015/946, Benson to Gorell Barnes, 1 Apr., 1955.

<sup>38</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Intelligence Extract, 'The African Nationalist Problem in Nyasaland', 29 Dec., 1958. Intelligence sources reported of the 'invigorating' effect that Banda's return to Nyasaland from Accra had upon the populace, which brought to Congress the drive and coordination that had been lacking in previous months.

<sup>39</sup> RH, DCP Box 2 NYC 13, Kafausiyanji to the Commission of Inquiry, 8 Apr., 1959

<sup>40</sup> MNA, MA1.877-371, District Commissioner, Karonga, to Sub-Chief Mwenemisuku, 8 Nov., 1958.

<sup>41</sup> RH, DCP Box 7, NYC 16, R.W. Kettlewell to Commission of Inquiry, 13 May, 1959. Soon after the Emergency was declared, for instance, the infamous NAC activist Flax Musopole was reported to have removed 'all traces' of the soil conservation schemes by burning the European supervisor's house and the houses of all six of his African staff. See also, McCracken, 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism', p.80.

In the view of British intelligence officials, Congress had by early 1959 succeeded in making the issue of Nyasaland's participation in the Federation 'an obsession' in the minds of the great majority of Africans in the country even down to the 'most humble villager'.<sup>42</sup> The report added that the Northern Province was a virtual hotbed of political activity.<sup>43</sup> Serious rioting broke out in several districts on 8 February following a series of illegal meetings called by the local Congress leadership. According to a security assessment, all branches of Congress in the region were 'engaged in activities to arouse people to illegal disturbances'.<sup>44</sup> The degree of support was '100% in the Misuku area' of Karonga and the standard of Congress leadership was reported as being 'very high'.<sup>45</sup> Integral to NAC unity at this time was Dr Banda himself, who had gained cult-like status since his return to Nyasaland in mid-1958. Banda was a figure that transcended tribal boundaries and cut across regional divides. At the time of the emergency, remarked John Mwanse, a former agricultural union official and MCP activist in Misuku in the 1960s, Banda inspired confidence in every African, attaining messianic status among his people. For a country in which Christian tradition was strong, the image of Dr Banda as a redeeming Messiah could easily be internalized and subscribed to by uncritical minds. This was symbolised, Mwanse recalled, in a parody of the Lord's Prayer, eulogising Banda, which became a mantra for Congress supporters;

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<sup>42</sup> RH, DCP Box 7, NYC 18, Confidential Report on the Strengthening of Administration in Nyasaland, 29 Apr., 1959.

<sup>43</sup> McCracken, 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism', p.79. McCracken stated that the administration consisted of ten European administrative officers and two African district assistants.

<sup>44</sup> NA, CO 1015/1749, Political Intelligence Report, Jan., 1959. By January 1959 no less than 53 out of 68 Congress branches were located in the Northern Province.

<sup>45</sup> RHP, DCP, Box 8, Appreciation of the Situation by Provincial Operations Committee, Mzuzu, 25 Feb., 1959.

Our Banda, who art in Blantyre, hallowed be they name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in Nyasaland as in Ghana.<sup>46</sup>

When Banda thus called for his supporters to intensify the anti-colonial struggle upon his return from Accra, they responded in kind. In January and February 1959, the number of illegal meetings more than doubled and reported instances of arson and sabotage became a prominent feature of Nyasaland intelligence reports.<sup>47</sup>

The emerging Banda-centred political culture, with its strong Christian overtones, rooted in the traditional Chewa concept of male guardianship over the family—in which Banda was ‘*Nkhoswe* Number One’ for Nyasaland’s men, women and children—reinforced tendencies to resort to intimidation in instances where the NAC was unsuccessful in persuading Africans to tow the party line. To refuse to join the party, or to reject aspects of the NAC’s campaign, was tantamount to rejecting Banda, who had selflessly returned to lead his people to freedom.<sup>48</sup> In the localities, intimidation took the form of threats, social ostracism, and in extreme cases, physical assault. Those not attending Congress meetings were warned that they were going to be either killed, or were going to be excluded, ‘chased away’, from the country when self-government came.<sup>49</sup> An even more disturbing fate awaited known local supporters of Federation. Rex Moses told the Devlin Commission in Lilongwe that he was attacked in his own house on 28 February for commenting upon the ‘financial advantages’ that the Federation brought to Nyasaland. A *Kwaca* [freedom] gang, composed largely of NAC Youth League

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with John Mwanse, Zomba, 28 Aug., 2011.

<sup>47</sup> See for instance NA, CO 1015/1749, Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Feb., 1959.

<sup>48</sup> RH, DCP Box 6, NYC 18, Recording of a Speech made by Henry Chipembere at Blantyre, 19 Feb., 1959. On a national level, politicians such as Manoah Chirwa, who openly disagreed with Congress’s policy of a boycott of the Federation, for instance, were freely denounced as ‘rotten’ and ‘filth-ridden’ stooges of the government.

<sup>49</sup> RH, DCP Box 13, Notes of a Meeting held in Mzuzu between Commission of Inquiry and Mr. Kanka Mhango (Deep Bay), 3 May, 1959.

members broke into his house, beat him, and cut open his forehead with a hand saw.<sup>50</sup>

The increasingly radical nature of African nationalism owed much to the ambitions of the 'younger men' in Congress, such as Henry Chipembere, the Chisiza brothers, Du and Yatuta, and Kanyama Chiume, who recognised the counter-attraction of violent policies that were likely to have brought 'quicker results than Gandhi's methods'.<sup>51</sup> This manifested, the Devlin Report later concluded, in Banda's inability, or at the very least, reluctance, to control his closest lieutenants.<sup>52</sup> There is no concrete evidence to prove decisively this was the case, but there is every reason to suspect that Dr Banda was in fact very much aware of the propensity of his followers towards more extreme methods, and had sought to deliberately cultivate a political culture in which NAC leaders were given a freer hand in shaping a more radical policy in order to apply greater pressure to the Nyasaland government to provide greater opportunities for African constitutional development. As Henry Chipembere had long advocated, 'some form of Mau Mau' was needed to provoke the government into action.<sup>53</sup> Congress protests had so far fallen on deaf ears and the NAC were not likely to have made significant headway with demands for an African majority. Given the extent of the NAC's problems, Banda himself was surely beginning to see the benefits of adopting a more aggressive position. Following the All-African Peoples Conference, for example, he had personally emphasised the virtues of self-sacrifice in the struggle to achieve African freedom.

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<sup>50</sup> RH, DCP Box 12, Depositions taken by the Commission in Lilongwe, 27 Apr., 1959.

<sup>51</sup> Cmd. 814, *Report of the Nyasaland Commission of Inquiry*, 16 July, 1959, paragraph 93.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 90.

<sup>53</sup> NA, CO 1015/1518, Quoted in Nyasaland Intelligence Report, June 1958.

I mean to fight Federation from prison or from the grave and even in the grave when I am ashes and dust my ghost will come back and fight the damned Federation. My people, I don't care what happens to me ... I promise you if, in order that Nyasaland may be free and independent, my blood, my life is required as sacrifice, I promise you can have it now.<sup>54</sup>

These were not the words of a leader content with the current course of events. Rather they pointed to a man keen for action, keen to make a concerted impact upon his followers to commit themselves fully to the freedom cause. It was in all probability Banda's decision to leave unchecked the actions and words of his NAC lieutenants that precipitated the adoption of a policy of violence and retaliatory murder of Europeans at the infamous 'meeting in the bush' on 24-25 January 1959.<sup>55</sup> Whilst Banda had arguably not anticipated the strength of government retribution in March, he clearly intended his party to make a statement that would cause the government to take Congress demands seriously. Banda had every opportunity to prevent the adoption of extreme tactics, but not once did he publicly steer his supporters away from radical methods. During the meeting in the bush, for instance, Banda requested to be excused during the time at which the Congress Central Executive Committee was to discuss a plan of action should he be arrested or assassinated.<sup>56</sup> Whilst this might in part reveal Banda's ambivalence to be seen by the government to acquiesce in the extremist tendencies of his followers, it also reflected his desire to bring matters to a head. The dynamic

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<sup>54</sup> NA, CO 1015/1754, Dr Banda's Speech at Blantyre, 28 Dec., 1958.

<sup>55</sup> Chipembere, H.M., *Hero of the Nation*, Edited and Introduced by Rotberg, R.I., (Blantyre, Malawi, 2001), p.375. It is not the purpose of this thesis to debate the validity of the 'murder plot' or the extent to which this was used as a premise to initiate a clampdown on the NAC. What is clear, however, is that violence was certainly a key feature of discussion at the 'meeting in the bush'. As Chipembere stated: 'If Banda were arrested, in order to induce the government to release him, Congress was to launch a program of action including all forms of violence short of killing ... If the whites carried out their threat of assassinating Banda, then a program of action including such forms of violence as retaliatory beatings and killing of whites was to be embarked upon'.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p.373.

approach that Banda had adopted since December 1958 could not be allowed to dissipate. The meeting in the bush might, therefore, be seen as a means by which the NAC hoped to stir the authorities into handing Africans constitutional concessions. The meeting was, after all, a very public affair.<sup>57</sup> It took place less than a kilometre from the Limbe police lines, delegates travelled in an open truck, and it was even mentioned in the *Nyasaland Times*.<sup>58</sup> It is surely legitimate to ask, therefore, if the NAC had planned to discuss violence, why had the meeting been given such wide publicity?

The response of Nyasaland authorities to the NAC threat consequently meant that by mid-1959 African nationalism was in retreat; the NAC had been banned and its leaders removed from the political scene. The pattern of events following the Nyasaland emergency had proved incontrovertibly that power and influence remained squarely in the hands of the Colonial and Federal governments. Yet, whilst their immediate prospects appeared bleak, time in detention would be a valuable exercise for African politicians, providing an opportunity for reflection. Success in the future, some believed, would henceforth depend upon the extent to which their supporters could be made to embrace a truly national agenda. In order for nationalism to survive, a new approach was needed that was capable of transcending local concerns and tribal boundaries, one that would command the unquestioning support of all Africans.

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<sup>57</sup> MNA, CAA, 151DMM1/1, Congress Secretariat to All Branches, 6 Jan., 1959. Branches were informed in the usual way, by circular, and were instructed to send two delegates. No agenda was attached, given that this was an emergency meeting.

<sup>58</sup> *Nyasaland Times*, 27 Jan., 1959. The meeting was also more coincidence than intentional. Having been refused a permit to meet, the NAC first met at the Ndirande Welfare Club, but this proved too small for several hundred delegates. It was thus decided to meet on a plot of waste land near Kanjedza Forest Reserve by Mount Soche, some two hundred yards from the main road. Transportation was provided by open truck.

### *Nationalism Revived: The Malawi Congress Party and Nyasaland's Progress to Self-Government, 1960-63*

In spite of attempts to eradicate the NAC in early 1959, the continuation of emergency restrictions ensured that resentment against the colonial state continued to build at local level.<sup>59</sup> Throughout the year, NAC orphans kept the colonial government 'on their toes' by tearing down anti-nationalist posters and forming small political cells. As John Mwanse remarked in interview, the emergency was not like issues that had faced Congress before; it was something that affected Africans everywhere. 'It did not matter if you were a fisherman or a priest', he said, 'government laws stopped Africans from living their everyday lives'.<sup>60</sup> The impact of politics at the *national* level, however, was ostensibly rather limited at first, not least because NAC leaders remained in detention. It was arguably not until former NAC activist Aleke Banda returned to Nyasaland upon his release from a Southern Rhodesian gaol in July that African nationalism began to show signs of revival. Upon his return, Banda took up a position at the Trade Union Congress offices in Blantyre, and with the help of fellow sympathisers he established in November 'Ntende pa Nchito', later *Malawi News*, a mimeographed broadsheet of the labour movement. The *Malawi News* served a crucial function. It was not only the mouthpiece of former NAC leaders, but it played an important role in keeping alive nationalist fervour throughout Nyasaland in the early 1960s.<sup>61</sup> 'It was the only paper that I read', remarked George Nyondo, a former civil servant and political activist in Zomba in the 1960s, and 'it was all I read to others'.<sup>62</sup> Together with Orton Chirwa,

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<sup>59</sup> MNA, 4/4/4/F, 16208, District Commissioner meeting with Chief Kyungu, 23 Mar., 1959.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with John Mwanse, Zomba, 28 Aug., 2011.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with George Nyondo, Zomba, 31 Aug., 2011.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*



released from detention by Nyasaland authorities in August, Banda entered a dialogue via a network of informants in prisons with Dr Banda. On 30 September, with Dr Banda's approval, Aleke Banda, Chirwa, Sydney Somanje, Chechiwa Bwanausi and Augustine Mtambara established the Malawi Congress Party. Chirwa was appointed President-General and Aleke Secretary-General.<sup>63</sup>

The foundation of the MCP marked a significant change in the character of nationalism in Nyasaland. Often regarded as the NAC by another name, the MCP quickly emerged as an infinitely larger party than its predecessor, more consciously 'traditionalist' in its style, distinctly more totalitarian in its approach. Unlike the NAC, it drew much of its support from the Central and Southern provinces, regions that the NAC had previously struggled to penetrate.<sup>64</sup> The MCP's political objectives were twofold: first, to press for the release of detainees and an end to emergency restrictions; and second, to build public support for the new party on the basis of a commitment to self-government, secession, and independence.<sup>65</sup> A central platform in the party's agenda was the emphasis upon unity. Borrowing tactics used by ZANC in Northern Rhodesia, party propagandists claimed that it was only through membership of Malawi that Africans could obtain freedom from colonial oppression.

The Malawi Congress Party is your Party. It is a mass organisation. It is the Party for all the children, women and men of this country. If you realise how vitally important it is at the moment for all the African people of this country to unity in their CAUSE for SECESSION FROM THE FEDERATION OF

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<sup>63</sup> McCracken, 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism', p.80.

<sup>64</sup> MNA CAA Mfilm 726, Weekly Notes to 23 Apr., 1960. As Joey Power remarks, this probably had much to do with the fact that a majority of leading politicians from the north, who had played such a key role in politicising the province, were at this stage still in detention. See Power J., *Building Kwacha*, p.147.

<sup>65</sup> As reported in *The Times*, 14 Nov., 1959.

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you will not hesitate to rally behind the Malawi Congress Party.<sup>66</sup>

Within two days of its formation, more than 1,000 Africans had joined the MCP. By the end of October, intelligence sources claimed that the party had over 15,000 members.<sup>67</sup>

The rapid growth of the MCP of course owed much to the activities of former NAC activists at the local level, but it also owed much to the initiative of the MCP's women's league and youth brigade. The League of Malawi Women was formed in November 1959 under the leadership of Mrs Malanga and Vera Chirwa.<sup>68</sup> The League of Malawi Youth was formed on 24 December under the leadership of Jomo Chikwakwa and Constance Makata.<sup>69</sup> Soon after the MCP's establishment, party leaders relied heavily upon both groups to spread news of the new party and agitate for political change. Given the perceived reluctance of the authorities to arrest women, the LMW were regarded as being particularly important with regards to political activism, especially in public displays of party loyalty. This was apparent at an incident that took place in Mlanje in March 1960, which resulted in the reading of the riot act after a group of some 100 people, including women, marched on the village boma to demand the release of 13 male prisoners from detention. The protest escalated when a small group of women tore down the tents of the assistant district commissioner and the agricultural officer, who were there to encourage observance of agricultural rules. The women called for assistance and

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<sup>66</sup> RH, FCB 104/3, Aleke Banda Press Release, 'A New Party, The Malawi Congress Party', 30 Sept., 1959. Emphasis here is contained in original document.

<sup>67</sup> NA, CO 1015/1755, Malawi Congress Party Circular, Sent from Chief Secretary to Secretary of State, 17 Nov., 1959. The circular lists membership as 300 on 1 October and 15,000 by the end of the month. It boasted 40 branches.

<sup>68</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.109.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.110.

in the ensuing melee, only men were arrested.<sup>70</sup> The LMW's most significant contribution at this time, however, was in its capacity to act as a propaganda tool. It was women that Hastings Banda encouraged to sing songs and dance for him at political meetings following his release from gaol in April 1960, something which made him 'happy, very happy', and it was Malawi's women who Banda implored to line the streets upon his arrival at important events in order to provide a sense of 'occasion'.<sup>71</sup> At a final MCP campaign meeting at Ndirande outside Blantyre in 1961, for instance, Lucy Mair described how Women's League members lined the route by which the Doctor walked from his car to platform, the path carpeted with women's cloths.<sup>72</sup>

The LMW had a significant ceremonial function. The LMY, on the other hand, served as the MCP's militant wing. Recruiting from the unemployed and disaffected, aged between 17 and 35, the LMY were well-placed in the opinion of intelligence officials for the staging of 'demonstrations, intimidation, and the commission of acts of violence and general flouting of authority'.<sup>73</sup> Soon after the LMY-led Ryall's Hotel protest on 26 January, in which LMY activists used the opportunity presented by Macmillan's visit to Blantyre to address guests at a civil luncheon to agitate against the continuation of emergency restrictions, Governor Armitage wrote to Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod stating that the LMY

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<sup>70</sup> MNA, CAA Mfilm 726, Ministry of Home Affairs, F120, L343/2, Situation Reports, Weekly Notes to 7 Mar., 1960.

<sup>71</sup> Chirwa, W., 'Dancing towards dictatorship: political songs and popular culture in Malawi'. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, (2001) p.16

<sup>72</sup> Mair, L., 'The Nyasaland Elections of 1961', *University of London Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Commonwealth Papers*, no. 7 (London, 1962), p.23.

<sup>73</sup> NA, CO 1015/2444, Special Branch Report, 'The League of Malawi Youth', Jan., 1960.

represented 'a clear potential danger' to law and order in Nyasaland.<sup>74</sup> By this stage the League claimed to boast a membership of over 25,000 distributed across 200 branches, contributing to a 'growing pattern of disorder' sweeping through certain districts in the territory.<sup>75</sup>

Both the LMY and LMW played an important role in stirring political unrest in key centres, making easier the task of the MCP's interim leaders to (re)build momentum behind the anti-federation struggle. By December 1959, the MCP had 52 branches: 31 in Southern Province, 18 in Central Province, and 3 in Northern Province. By January 1960, this had risen to 37, 28, and 12, respectively, and by February to 119, 53, and 51.<sup>76</sup> Special Branch reported that the party had some 67,000 members but admitted that this was probably an underestimate, so quickly were new members signing up.<sup>77</sup> Figures printed in the *Malawi News* in September 1960 put the total at over a million, though this could quite easily have referred only to the number of membership cards printed. By October 1961, the MCP was said to have extended to 2,784 branches, 1,842 MCP, 126 LMY and 816 LMW, with an estimated membership of over 100,000.<sup>78</sup>

An intrinsic part of extending the MCP's reach revolved around attempts to politicise Nyasaland's trade unions. 'Trade union leaders', wrote Aleke Banda in March 1960, needed to 'tighten up their buckles and get down to real work',

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<sup>74</sup> MNA, CAA MNA Mfilm, F 163/81/35, Minute on the Southworth Commission Report, 17 May, 1960, see also NA, CO 1015/2444, Armitage to Macleod, 1 Feb., 1960.

<sup>75</sup> NA, CO 1015/2445, Nyasaland Intelligence Committee Report, 'The League of Malawi Youth', 4 Aug., 1960. In all, 35 protestors were arrested, 23 of whom were confirmed as members of the LMY.

<sup>76</sup> NA, CO 1015/2444, Intelligence Report, 9 Jan., 1960; Intelligence Report for February, 8 Mar., 1960

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* Membership stood at 7,000 in the Northern Province, 20,000 in the Central Province and 40,000 in the Southern Province.

<sup>78</sup> NA, CO 1015/2445, Malawi Congress Party, Special Branch Report, 14 Oct., 1961.

standing shoulder to shoulder with Congress in the national struggle.<sup>79</sup> As demonstrated in chapter two, few inroads were made into the small trade union movement prior to the banning of the NAC in March 1959. Even during the emergency, workers had displayed an ambivalence to involve themselves in political concerns.<sup>80</sup> By 1960, however, the upturn in labour activity, indicated by the swell in trade union membership from the low figure of 1,300 in 1957 to well over 7,000, gave MCP leaders reason to think that the political momentum generated by the unions was worth harnessing.<sup>81</sup> The rise in trade union membership was mirrored in the rise of labour disputes at this time too, from nine minor stoppages in 1955 to three trade disputes and 15 strikes in 1958 and on to 81 disputes, 77 involving strikes, in 1960.<sup>82</sup>

As Tony Woods suggests, support for the MCP varied in different unions. Whilst the Railway Workers Union remained cautious about adopting a more militant stance, the Nyasaland Transport and Allied Workers Union staunchly endorsed Congress. Aleke Banda underlined the close relationship between the two organisations when he lauded the Nyasaland Transport and Allied Workers Union's efforts 'to do some honest, militant and real trade Unionism' in June 1960.<sup>83</sup> The number of MCP members present in trade unions is difficult to gauge, but it was nevertheless widely recognised that the party was beginning to play an important

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<sup>79</sup> NA, CO 1015/2444, *Malawi News*, 7 Mar., 1960.

<sup>80</sup> RH, DCP Box 9, Operations Control Diary, 6 Mar. 1959. During the first 24 hours, workers in several parts of Blantyre vented their anger by going on strike, building road blocks and stoning cars. Only a day later, however, employees trickled back to work. On 6 March the atmosphere in Blantyre was said to be still 'rather tense', but the Governor noted that the labour situation had pretty much returned to normal.

<sup>81</sup> McCracken, J., 'Labour in Nyasaland: An Assessment of the 1960 Railway Workers' Strike', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, (Jan., 1988), p.263.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> NA, CO 1015/2444, *Malawi News*, 6 Jun., 1960.

role in creating a more radical class consciousness among rail and other industrial workers. By July 1960, for instance, the General Manager of the railways reported that an atmosphere similar to that witnessed before the 1959 emergency could be detected. 'The whole field of labour is on edge and strikes or threats of strikes are made on the slightest provocations'. The root cause of the trouble, he added, was 'undoubtedly the Malawi Congress Party'.<sup>84</sup>

### *The Growth of the MCP and the 'Cult of Kamuzu'*

Although the MCP's growth was on the whole rather impressive, it was sporadic and in many areas dependent upon the existence of former NAC branches where there still remained at least some remnants of the old party organisation.<sup>85</sup> Given the preoccupation with the campaign to end the emergency, attempts to adopt a coherent, long-term, political strategy were also lacking. The solution for the MCP's interim leaders was to play upon Hastings Banda's centrality to the national movement in order to draw together the people of Nyasaland. He would not only provide a point of continuity between the MCP and its predecessor, but would also provide an opportunity to maximise the political leverage gained from the imprisonment of NAC leaders. It was Banda that had shown a willingness to sacrifice himself for his people and it was Banda that personified the African struggle in Nyasaland.<sup>86</sup> If people came to believe such rhetoric, it was felt that the Nyasa people would be prepared to make similar sacrifices.

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<sup>84</sup> Woods, 'Bread with Freedom and Peace', p.730.

<sup>85</sup> NA, CO 1015/2233, Political Intelligence Report, Dec., 1959.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with David Gondwe, former African civil servant in first MCP government, 1966-85 Lilongwe, 25 Aug., 2011.

In the initial instance, then, Hastings Banda himself would form the central platform to the MCP's political and mobilisation programme. It was seen as a way, not only of uniting the people behind the party, but of developing a truly 'national' ideal to which all could subscribe. Soon after his widely publicised release from gaol and his appointment as MCP President in April 1960, he and his closest lieutenants embarked upon a process of consolidating his position in the Malawian polity, making synonymous the 'cult of Kamuzu' with the party's fight for independence. This would help show that the MCP was not just a reincarnation of the NAC; it was Kamuzu's personal party under which all who joined would be protected and under whose leadership the people of Nyasaland would be lead to their freedom. The cultivation of such ideas owed much to the work of Kanyama Chiume, whose 'drive and tireless dedication to the task' helped ingrain in the minds of MCP followers that Banda's word was 'law' against which there could be no argument.<sup>87</sup> Everything in Nyasaland belonged to Banda; 'to serve Kamuzu to death' must be the motto of every sane nationalist in the country', wrote Chiume to his leader in January 1961.<sup>88</sup> This message was carried throughout the territory, both verbally by Malawi officials and in the columns of the *Malawi News*; the message was also echoed in songs sung by the LMW.<sup>89</sup>

*Zonse zimene, n'za Kamuzu Banda* Everything else, belongs to Kamuzu Banda  
*Zonse zimene, n'za Kamuzu Banda* Everything else, belongs to Kamuzu Banda  
*ONyanja zonse? N'za Kamuzu Banda* All the lakes, for Kamuzu Banda  
*Ng'ombe zonse? N'za Kamuzu Banda* All the cattle, for Kamuzu Banda

<sup>87</sup> Ross, A.C., 'Reflections on the Malawi Cabinet Crisis, 1964-65' *Religion in Malawi*, Vol.3, No.12, Nov., 1997, p. 24.

<sup>88</sup> Baker, C., *Revolt of the Ministers: the Malawi Cabinet Crisis, 1964-1965*, (London, 2001), p.46.

<sup>89</sup> Chirwa, V., *Fearless Fighter, An Autobiography* (London, 2007), p.45. See also NA, CO 1015/1755, Malawi Congress Party Circular, Sent from Chief Secretary to Secretary of State, 17 Nov., 1959.

*Ife tonse? Ndi a Kamuzu Banda* All of us, for Kamuzu Banda.<sup>90</sup>

Whether the Banda cult was initially adopted for purposes of political convenience, or whether MCP leaders genuinely felt Banda really ought to occupy a central place in the national dispensation is uncertain. What is clear, however, is that Banda himself believed that he could fulfil no other role. He was not brought back to Nyasaland to be a 'front man to be run by young people no matter how brilliant they were', he told Donal Brody in interview.<sup>91</sup> In various speeches made during a protectorate-wide tour in which he was accompanied by Chiume and Aleke Banda, Banda inveighed against stooges, emphasising his own centrality to the fight for freedom. *He* was going to London to demand 'self-government now', and *he* was going to win for the people their freedom.<sup>92</sup> With Banda seemingly Britain's preferred interlocutor after 1960, in large part a corollary of the belief in official circles that only Banda was capable of controlling his own followers and dissuading them from pursuing an otherwise more extreme course, he could easily afford to inject a new 'bitterness and venom' into his speeches without fear of repression.<sup>93</sup> The only way to achieve African self-government was by supporting the Kamuzu and the MCP. If an individual elected to follow another path, they would find themselves marginalised and at worst, excluded, from the MCP's vision of an independent Malawi.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Lwanda, J. *Kamuzu of Malawi- a study in promise, power and paralysis (Malawi under Dr Banda 1961 to 1993)*, (Glasgow, 1993), p.80.

<sup>91</sup> Dr Brody's interview with Banda can be found at Brody, D., 'Hastings Banda, A Biography', <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7693584/Dr-Banda-Biography1>, accessed 14 Dec., 2010.

<sup>92</sup> NA, CO 1015/2440, Speech made in Nkata Bay on 5 Jun., 1960, 13 Jun., 1960.

<sup>93</sup> MNA, NN4/2/7, Southern Province Monthly Reports, September, 1960, 13 Oct., 1960.

<sup>94</sup> See for example, NA, CO 1015/2440, 'Some Impressions of the Situation in Nyasaland', 4 Jul., 1960.



This somewhat exclusivist rhetoric filtered throughout every level of the party. Banda's own assertiveness, and insistence upon claiming for Nyasaland self-government at the forthcoming constitutional discussions in London in late 1960, instilled a new militancy into his MCP leadership cadres. In an article published in the *Malawi News* in October 1960, for instance, Aleke Banda warned that, 'on matters that touch our independence, we are prepared to part company with any person who wants to oppress us – high or low placed. Bishop, Governor, politician, civil servant or any other person who stands in our way can be sure of an attack from us'.<sup>95</sup> This was reflected most clearly in the MCP's growing intransigence towards the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian [CCAP]. The CCAP had been valued supporters of the MCP's predecessor. CCAP missions at Livingstone and Blantyre proved especially valuable to the NAC during the Nyasaland emergency, providing shelter for former NAC members and offering a forum in which Africans could discuss political matters away from the fear of state repression. Increasingly, however, the MCP came to resent the Church's 'political activities'. In April 1960, Aleke Banda spoke out against the 'oppressive nature of church missions', emphasising that it was no longer their place to involve themselves in MCP matters:

We have made it clear that we are not against the spiritual teachings and activities of that Church. But this we must repeat – we are not prepared to allow the Church as a Church to get itself involve in party politics under the guise of religion. We do not care what Church it may be. The church has its realm and that is the spiritual realm ... The people of Malawi are not the people to play with. They know what they want and no bishop can deflect them from their course. We must repeat that here in our country of Malawi we are determined to rule ourselves.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> NA, CO 1015/2445, *Malawi News*, Oct., 1960.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr., and Oct., 1960.

A little over a year later, the Special Branch noted that the CCAP wielded 'considerably less influence with the MCP than it did with the Nyasaland African Congress'.<sup>97</sup> Roman Catholic missions also came under attack. On 8 July 1960, intelligence sources reported that a Roman Catholic mission was invaded soon after it had hosted the Governor. Its inhabitants were driven out and patients in the mission hospital were chased away, one of them allegedly a woman in labour who was 'forced to give birth in the bush'.<sup>98</sup>

The most forceful expression of the MCP's new militancy came in a series of vitriolic speeches delivered by Henry Chipembere, Malawi's Treasurer-General, after his release from detention in December in which he denounced the Federation and encouraged MCP members to take decisive action against those seeking to quash the party's ambitions.

I am going to propose that Malawi must adopt a more violent and more militant policy to crush federation ... those who want us to continue must be prepared to suffer, to put into operation our policy of positive action to crush federation.<sup>99</sup>

He reserved his most vicious remarks for Europeans.

If they come to you ... spit on the dog and urinate on him. We don't accept these Europeans as friends, they are our enemies, they have been killing our people, they have the blood of our people on their hands ... we reject their brotherhood and their partnership.<sup>100</sup>

Chipembere's words excited those who were keen to pursue a more extreme course of action. No more than two weeks later, the League of Malawi Youth were described by Captain Roach of the Nyasaland security services as being 'increasingly truculent and hard to handle', appearing 'reluctant to follow the policy of non-

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<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, Nyasaland Intelligence Committee Report, Oct., 1961.

<sup>98</sup> NA, CO 1015/2238, Secret Despatch, 'Intimidation for Political Purposes in Nyasaland, 22 Dec., 1960.

<sup>99</sup> NA, CO 1015/2445, Notes on a Speech by Chipembere, given at Zomba, 3 Dec., 1960.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

violence' advocated publicly by Banda whilst he was discussing Nyasaland's future in London.<sup>101</sup> Since the publication of the Monckton Report in October, Special Branch reported, intimidation had become widespread. The MCP was thus expected to 'continue to use intimidation in the future to further its aims', and despite denials by Dr Banda it was 'unlikely' that it would be abandoned as a political weapon.<sup>102</sup>

There is little doubt that the MCP's new militancy was a policy that percolated down from the very top of the party, rooted in Banda's own insistence of his centrality to the struggle and the increasing intolerance with which leading party officials, such as Chipembere and Aleke Banda came to regard those who refused to subscribe to the MCP's national vision. Rather ironically, the 'breakdown of order' identified by Special Branch had the effect of enhancing Banda's standing with the Nyasaland and British authorities, and, subsequently, his standing within nationalist politics. It is not entirely clear whether Banda turned up the political temperature in order to increase pressure on the Nyasaland government to resolve pressing constitutional issues, or whether he had done so as a means to root out those MCP members keen for a more militant course of action so that he could discern which members of his party were advocating a course different from Banda's own, but either way, Banda certainly benefitted from the decision to allow the actions of the MCP's radical cohort to remain unchecked. When plans were made by the British to arrest six MCP members including Chipembere by the end of December, some of Banda's key rivals were removed from the scene at a critical

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<sup>101</sup> MNA, CAA Mfilm 2075, F248/M1/1/NY/6, Intelligence Appreciations 1960-62, Copy Secret Appreciation, Captain M.H. Roach MIO Nyasaland Area, 17 Dec., 1960.

<sup>102</sup> NA, CO 1015/2238, Secret Despatch, 'Intimidation for Political Purposes in Nyasaland, 22 Dec., 1960.

stage in the transition to self-government.<sup>103</sup> Banda accepted plans to arrest Chipembere, acknowledging that 'such matters must take their course', and when his subsequent trial ended in conviction the next month, Banda made no effort to intervene or mitigate.<sup>104</sup> By allowing his radical lieutenants to dig their own political graves, Banda put clear distance between himself and the radicals, effectively engineering a situation in which only *he* was likely to emerge as the man with whom the British could negotiate. This was undoubtedly a risky strategy, but the isolation, and later removal, of political rivals was one that would be frequently deployed by Banda over the course of the following years.

Renewed MCP militancy in 1960 had several important ramifications for the MCP and Malawi's future. One of the principal effects was to compel people into party membership. Naturally, this did not apply to all, but in several interviews conducted in Zomba during August 2011 it was clear that not all who joined the MCP did so because they genuinely subscribed to the MCP's agenda. Rather, they did so because party membership offered safety; for themselves, and for their families. George Nyondo vividly described *his* position in the early 1960s.

I joined Malawi, not because they offered freedom, but [because] I wanted to make sure my family were safe. Everywhere we were told that people were joining Kamuzu's revolution and that soon he would lead us all to independence. Where we lived everyone was [a] party member. If I stayed away from party meetings and did not buy a party card I was afraid what would happen to us. We had heard stories of houses being burnt down and people being beaten by Malawi Youth. I did not want this to happen to my family.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> NA, DO 158/36, Acting Governor, Sir Glyn Jones to Maudling, 15 Dec., 1960.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, Nyasaland Information Officer to Macleod, 17 Dec., 1960.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with George Nyondo, Zomba, 31 Aug., 2011. Nyondo was a former African civil servant working in the Ministry of Finance in Zomba during the 1950s. He stated that whilst the attitude of the Federal Government towards advancement was regrettable, he trusted those administrative officers in the Nyasaland Government to look after the interests of Africans and promote, where appropriate, African advancement.

How widely Nyondo's experiences were shared is almost impossible to determine, but it is important nonetheless to point out that for some, affiliation to the party was not always motivated by the belief that the MCP represented their political aspirations. To draw parallels with Daniel Branch's findings in relation to African loyalists in Kenya during the 1950s, participation in politics was for many Africans conditioned by practical considerations.<sup>106</sup> Some undoubtedly joined the MCP, for instance, because possession of an MCP party card offered protection and security. This came to be recognised by a small number of government officials such as G. Landreth, District Commissioner of Karonga, who remarked in 1959 that the creation of a climate of intolerance gave rise to the belief that 'there would be Hell to pay' if people were found to be on the wrong side.

They have seen what has gone on in a place like Ghana. They might well feel, I think, that if they were on the wrong side when the government eventually came to the top, the government, having regard to the known habits of Europeans, would probably forgive them and let them get away with quite a lot whereas if they were on the wrong side and an African nationalist movement came out supreme then life would not be very nice.<sup>107</sup>

Whilst crucial to acknowledge that not all were willing subscribers to the MCP's programme, it would be misleading to imply that a bulk of the MCP's membership owed much to intimidation rather than being 'won over' by the party's powerful, pro-independence message. As testified by the MCP's overwhelming victory in the August 1961 elections, a vast majority of the African populace voted for the MCP on the secessionist ticket. Winning all 20 lower roll constituencies 'did not surprise anyone', remarked Lucy Mair, who visited Nyasaland to observe the

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<sup>106</sup> Branch, D., *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War and Decolonisation* (Cambridge, 2009), p.215.

<sup>107</sup> RH, DCP Box 13, Notes of a Meeting held at Karonga between Commission of Inquiry and Mr. G.J.T. Landreth, DC Karonga, 8 May, 1959.

election, 'but not everyone expected the very high poll of over 90 per cent in every constituency and the very small number of votes for the opposition'.<sup>108</sup> Voting had almost the solemnity of a 'religious ritual';

No police control was necessary. Most voters assembled at the polling stations an hour before the opening time of 6.30 a.m. and formed into silent queues. At one station in the Central Province, 400 voters camped out. People from the same village kept together and this made the checking of names easy. One or two hopefully offered rejection slips as evidence of their right to vote, but made no trouble when they were turned away. In the event, the MCP won all 20 lower roll seats and two of the eight upper roll seats in the Legislative Council. Soon after, Nyasaland's new Governor, Glyn Jones, granted five, and later seven of the ten available places on the Executive Council to Dr Banda's party. By the beginning of 1962, Dr Banda, nominally only the Minister of Land, Natural Resources, and Local Government, had emerged as Nyasaland's de facto Prime Minister.<sup>109</sup>

Malawi's success of course owed much to the organisation of the MCP's election campaign, which placed great emphasis on outlining to the people the party's main objectives and the composition of the new legislature. This was, Mair suggested, 'the day of passing from slavery to freedom, the day of the departure of Israel from Egypt, led by the saviour, the messiah, Kamuzu Banda, who had already rescued his people from the hated agricultural regulations'.<sup>110</sup> As outlined above, many might well have been pressed into voting for the MCP out of fear, but there were significant numbers to whom the vision of a Banda-dominated Malawi greatly appealed.

### *Contradictions in Malawian Nationalism, 1959-1964*

Reflecting on the events of 1961, Henry Chipembere remarked that the year marked a 'change in the mood of the people',

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<sup>108</sup> Mair, 'The Nyasaland Elections of 1961', p.25.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.68.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25.

When I went to prison [in December 1961] the people looked sad and diffident ... Now the people were wearing smiling faces. The servile [and] slave mentality, which had been artificially foisted on them ... has now disappeared for good. As a result you have springing up everywhere a spirit of self-reliance, initiative and independence of mind ... Wherever we went we found schools, roads, dispensaries, bridges, built by the people on their own initiative and when I asked them 'How do you manage to do all this since it was not happening before I went to prison?', they all replied 'Ngwazi Kamuzu Banda has called upon us to work hard and this is our response'.<sup>111</sup>

From the remnants of the NAC emerged a new party, rapidly gaining a following amongst individuals and groups previously excluded from anti-Federation politics. African politicians had adapted to changed political circumstances in post-emergency Nyasaland, conceiving of a 'national' political programme to which many more Africans subscribed than hitherto. Paradoxically, the actions of the British and Nyasaland governments, in seeking to eradicate what was perceived as a hostile strain of nationalism in 1959, gave it a decisive boost. It precipitated a reappraisal among nationalists as to the direction of the national movement, emphasising the importance of bringing together the masses behind a concept that transcended politics, socio-economic and tribal divides.

The 1961 elections had undoubtedly consolidated the MCP's position in Nyasaland politics, establishing the basis from which African self-government would later evolve. From the perspective of MCP leaders, the struggle against Federation had been won; it was no longer a matter of 'if', but 'when', secession would occur. The colour bar *would* now be broken. Attention now shifted to consolidate the MCP's position in the Nyasaland polity. For the MCP, the primary threat to the achievement of the party's goals after 1961 came not from Nyasaland's privileged

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<sup>111</sup> Quote from Chipembere in Nyasaland Legislative Assembly, March 1963, taken from Baker, C., *Chipembere: The Missing Years* (London, 2006), p.59.

European settler community and the colonial state, but from those anti-MCP voices within the African community who presented an overt challenge to Banda and the MCP's dominance. The message propagated by Malawi headquarters was clear: 'the Party intends to rule in Nyasaland and will brook no opposition from any quarter'.<sup>112</sup>

Tensions within African politics eventually burst through the surface in the years before independence.<sup>113</sup> In January 1962, for instance, Nyasaland intelligence sources reported that members of the Nyasaland African National Union [NANU], an opposition movement formed by former MCP activist Pemba Ndove in 1961, had been viciously assaulted in the Northern Province following Banda's public denunciation of the party.<sup>114</sup> In several separate incidents, prominent anti-MCP politicians including Chester Katsonga, John Machemba, and Douglas Mahone—all of whom had voiced concerns over Banda's dominance in Nyasaland politics—were also assaulted by MCP and LMY radicals. As Julian Greenfield, Federal Minister for Law, claimed in July 1963, the irresponsible and intransigent attitude of the MCP was contributing to a general breakdown in law and order.<sup>115</sup> The journal *East Africa and Rhodesia* echoed Greenfield's unease, reporting that people were being beaten or set on fire for using insulting language about the MCP or for failing to produce party cards on demand.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *Malawi News*, Dec., 1962.

<sup>113</sup> See for example Nyasaland Police Reports, MNA 5/11, 18-67f, 14775, Blantyre Police Report for August 1962, 13 Sept., 1962 and also Blantyre Monthly Report June 1963, 7 Jul., 1963.

<sup>114</sup> MNA, 5/12, 11-57f, 14543, Nyasaland Police Report for April 1962.

<sup>115</sup> RH, WP 244/2, 'Erosion of the Rule of Law in Nyasaland', 23 Jul., 1963.

<sup>116</sup> *East Africa and Rhodesia*, 26 Sept., 1963.



Matters reached a climax in December 1963, when Gilbert Pondeponde, a founding member of the Christian Democratic Party, was brutally murdered.<sup>117</sup> MCP leaders were unapologetic. As Edwin Chibambo stated in the Legislative Assembly, 'no-one' would be permitted to 'disrespect the Kamuzu'; anyone found to be doing so would be 'eaten alive'.<sup>118</sup> By April 1964, over 2,000 assaults and almost a dozen deaths were alleged to have been committed by individuals associated with the MCP.<sup>119</sup> As John McCracken suggests, given the extent to which the police had become tools of the MCP government, a corollary of the complex patronage network that arose from the policy to accelerate the promotion of African inspectors after 1961, the MCP's anti-opposition stance came to be tolerated, and in some cases buttressed, by the authorities, now of course under the governmental authority of the MCP.<sup>120</sup> Prior to the 1964 elections, for example, police arrested 12 protesters named by the Prime Minister's Office who had harassed and threatened D.A.S. Chibingwe, Banda's choice of candidate for Kota Kota. An unpopular choice from the outset, intelligence sources reported that on 19 March Chibingwe was cornered for several hours in the district police station while armed protestors massed outside singing anti-Chibingwe songs.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> MNA, 5/11, 18-67f, 14775, Blantyre Monthly Report December, 7 Jan., 1964.

<sup>118</sup> RH, WP 244/5, Extracts from Nyasaland Legislative Assembly during the proceedings of the eighth meetings of the Seventy-Sixth Session, 9-10 Jul., 1963.

<sup>119</sup> NA, DO 183/133, dispatch from Jones to Central Africa Office, Apr., 1964. The attacks were intended, argued Governor Glyn Jones, to 'prevent any African opposition party from contesting seats in the May election'.

<sup>120</sup> McCracken, J., 'Authority and Legitimacy in Malawi: policing and politics in a colonial state', in D. M. Anderson and D. Killingray (eds.), *Policing and Decolonisation. Nationalism, Politics and the Police 1917-65* (Manchester, 1992), p.181. Faced by the imminent prospect of self-government, the police halted the recruitment of expatriate officers in November 1961 and turned instead to accelerating promotion of African inspectors and gazetted officers of whom there were 121 by the end of the year. By 1961, more than one in three inspectors were Nyasas; these men owed their promotion to the government and, by 1962, it was Banda's government to whom they were loyal.

<sup>121</sup> NA, DO 183/137, Nyasaland Intelligence Committee Report, Mar., 1964.

The effect of the MCP's approach was to create a climate of intolerance in which silence prevailed and suspicion thrived. In a candid interview, Abikanile George, daughter of an LMW organiser in Blantyre, recalled that in her village, people became scared to talk about politics for fear of inciting trouble. 'My mother and father told us not to talk about politics', she said, 'they told us that these times were uncertain and that if we were heard saying anything bad about the government we [could] be punished'.<sup>122</sup> Perhaps more fundamentally, however, the extension of authoritarian policies suggests that the very nature of nationalism developing in Nyasaland from 1959 had undergone a fundamental change from the rhetoric espoused by the NAC between 1953 and 1958. It was gradually eroding the premise of African unity upon which the anti-Federation struggle had initially been conceived. The shift towards a political culture that precluded the expression of alternative views may have been a small price to pay insofar as ensuring MCP domination in the short term but it was done at the cost of long-term unity. Perhaps the ultimate irony then, is that the achievement of independence in July 1964 did not bring complete freedom for *all* Africans. As the party began to strengthen its hold over the African polity by systematically removing its rivals from the national scene, the arena for competition and rivalry was transferred from outside the party to *within* it. As key individuals and interest groups within the party attempted to assert their own ideals about Nyasaland's future, internal conflict rose to the fore. As Du Chisiza, the MCP's Secretary General had predicted

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<sup>122</sup> Interview with Abikanile George, Zomba, 30 Aug., 2011. On account of her age (she 12 at the time), Mrs George remarked that she could not quite recall what times were like in the village during the 1950s. In the early 1960s, however, she spoke of the uncertainty that prevailed. People were still unsure whether they were going to get independence, she added, and as such, 'we had to be quiet so as not to jeopardise our future'.

before his untimely death in a car accident on 3 September 1962, difficulties were bound to arise once it became clear that Africans were soon likely to achieve their long-held goals.

When it becomes clear that the party is due to accomplish its objectives, the problem of reconciling submissiveness to the top leader and individual initiative in the party of the second-level leaders arises. To a man who had been surrounded by submissive associates for a long time, the exercise of initiative by his associates is easily misconstrued as a sign of rivalry and disloyalty.<sup>123</sup>

The divisions created from internal conflict within the MCP resulted in the marginalisation of key individuals once previously central to the development of African politics. They became, as will be shown, a replacement for the agitation once previously levied against the Federation, a point around which the people of Malawi could unite having lost the focal point for political agitation. Tensions within the MCP did not take long to materialise, beginning with the ignominious Cabinet Revolt of 1964.

### *The 'Cult of Kamuzu' in Crisis? The Malawi Cabinet Crisis of 1964 and the Contradictions in Malawian Nationalism*

Central to disagreement in the MCP in the early 1960s was Dr Banda's growing hold over the nationalist movement. As Chipembere's call for militant action against Europeans in 1960 demonstrated, many senior Congress members were ambivalent about towing the Banda line. They were concerned not only that Banda's cooperation with the British and Nyasaland governments would result in a constitution that fell short of African aspirations, but also that the concentration of power in one man was beginning to undermine their authority in the Malawi

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<sup>123</sup> Chisiza, D.K., 'The Temper, Aspirations and Problems of Contemporary Africa', *Relating Principles of Economic Development to African Economic Development*, The Nyasaland Economic Symposium, 19-28 Jul., 1962

Congress. Doubts over the 'cult of Kamuzu' were initially voiced by Chipembere and the Chisiza brothers, Yatuta and Dunduza, whilst in detention at Kanjedza in 1959. Andrew Ross, a CCAP Minister since 1958, frequently visited NAC detainees and later spoke of their concern about Banda's synonymy with 'freedom'. Whilst Chiume was singing 'everything is for Kamuzu', he said, 'the Chisizas and Chipembere used to joke that there would be big problems if HKB came to believe it'.<sup>124</sup> Disagreement was apparent in a series of speeches given by Chipembere during his tour of the Protectorate in late 1960. Refuting the notion that Banda was central to Congress, Chipembere emphasised that it was he and his allies who led Dr Banda and 'NOT Dr Banda' who leads them.<sup>125</sup>

Division was also evident in concerns expressed over the perceived 'unequal' distribution of power within the party's leadership following the elections of 1961.<sup>126</sup> Whilst the MCP had undergone something of a regional transformation, gathering much of its strength from the Southern and Central Provinces, this was not reflected in the Malawi leadership, which continued to be dominated by Northern Province-based politicians. Banda's decision to personally nominate all MCP candidates for the elections accentuated the growing trend. The influence of the northerners reached a peak in September 1961 when Yatuta Chisiza was appointed the party's Administrative Secretary, Kanyama Chiume as Publicity Secretary, Orton Chirwa as Legal Adviser, and Rose Chibambo as the Chairman of the Woman's League.<sup>127</sup> None of the influential Blantyre-based businessmen on the

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<sup>124</sup> Andrew Ross remarks in Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.152.

<sup>125</sup> MNA CAA Mfilm 2075, F248/M1/1/NY/6, Intelligence Appreciations 1960-62, Copy Secret Appreciation, Captain M.H. Roach MIO Nyasaland Area, 17 Dec., 1960.

<sup>126</sup> McCracken, 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism', p.80-83.

<sup>127</sup> NA, CO 1015/2444, *Malawi News*, 21 Sept., 1961.

National Executive Committee, Lawrence Makata, Sidney Somanje, and Lali Lubani, were selected by Banda, and by October 1961 the three men joined with the teacher Willie Chokani in founding a rival, southern-based bloc in Congress opposed dominance of northerners. Special Branch noted the 'jealousy of Northerners' among leading politicians from other provinces, and noted with interest Dr Banda's seeming dilemma in dealing with the burgeoning conflict.<sup>128</sup> Whilst continuing to 'refute' claims that regional cleavages were characteristic of MCP politics, he appeared reluctant to resolve the situation. As the author of a Special Branch report noted, this worked to Banda's benefit in so far as he was able to make use of the friction between his closest lieutenants to 'assert his authority more effectively'.<sup>129</sup>

Tensions eventually boiled over in a Cabinet meeting on 26 August 1964, in which some of Banda's ministers including Chipembere, Chiume, Yatuta Chisiza and Chokani challenged their President on several issues relating to domestic and external policy.<sup>130</sup> In the domestic sphere, Banda was criticised for introducing the threepenny charge for hospital visits and for endorsing the recommendations of the Skinner Report, which undermined previous pledges to accelerate the Africanisation of the civil service.<sup>131</sup> They also challenged Banda's dictatorial leadership style, accusing him of nepotism. Particularly irksome was Aleke Banda's growing influence in the party. By 1964, at the age of only 24, Aleke was given

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<sup>128</sup> NA, CO 1015/2445, Special Branch Report, 'The Malawi Congress Party', 14 October 1961.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Baker, *Revolt of the Ministers*, p.254.

<sup>131</sup> The Skinner Report made a number of recommendations projected to save government some £200,000 per year. It raised the salaries of civil servants in the lower ranks and lowered those in the higher ranks, leaving the salaries of the middle ranks unchanged. Expatriates came under a different system, and this, coupled with the lack of explanation for these changes and Banda's insistence that promotion should be based on qualifications gave the Skinner Report a racial cast.

responsibility for the lines of communication for the government and the party, a matter over which the discontented ministers had no effective control. Ministers also viewed with some concern Banda's decision to improve relations with the 'racist' regimes of Portuguese Mozambique and apartheid South Africa at the expense of preserving existing links with Tanzania and Northern Rhodesia, which was due to become independent in October.<sup>132</sup> At the root of the crisis, those ministers that had played such a pivotal role in politicising Nyasaland during the 1950s now found that they were being excluded from the country's future. As Colin Cameron, the only European minister in the MCP-dominated government observed, 'all the ministers were seething with anger about Dr Banda's dictatorial behaviour. It was as clear as daylight that there was serious trouble ahead'.<sup>133</sup>

Matters reached a climax on 3 September when Banda dismissed Chiume, Chirwa and Augustine Bwanausi. In protest at the treatment of their cabinet colleagues, Yatuta Chisiza, Chokani and John Msonthi resigned. Allegations against the dismissed ministers were made public during a two-day session of parliament on 8-9 September. Banda labelled his former colleagues as 'disobedient' and 'disloyal' rebels, singling out Orton Chirwa, Yatuta and Chiume for special condemnation.<sup>134</sup> Chipembere defended the charges levied against each of the ministers. How could a man like Orton Chirwa, he argued, be accused of disloyalty when he was responsible for maintaining party discipline?<sup>135</sup> His protestations were in vain. Dr Banda gained an overwhelming vote of confidence in Parliament, and

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<sup>132</sup> Ross, 'Reflections on the Malawi Cabinet Crisis', p.28.

<sup>133</sup> Baker, *Chipembere*, p.69.

<sup>134</sup> NA, DO 183/168, Cole to Commonwealth Relations Office, 11 Sept., 1964.

<sup>135</sup> Power, *Building Kwacha*, p.184. Crucially, he also alluded to the changes in Malawi politics. After the Prime Minister had warned people to 'watch out for confusionists', he began to listen to 'lies'.

thereafter embarked upon a tour of the Central and Northern Provinces, publicly castigating the ministerial rebels. Banda warned people that they would be 'meat for crocodiles' if they continued to pledge their loyalty to the rebels.<sup>136</sup> Banda told his people that the LMW, LMY and the newly created Malawi Young Pioneers, the paramilitary wing of the MCP under the leadership of Aleke Banda, had been instructed to look out for rebels and their supporters.<sup>137</sup> 'Make sure that Chipembere does not even make a nuisance of himself', Banda told his activists, 'watch everybody who comes back from Tanganyika, or Zambia or even Rhodesia or South Africa. Watch every one of them! See what he is doing, listen to what he says and report him'.<sup>138</sup> Popular songs that emerged at this time denouncing Chipembere and his rebel cohorts reflected both the extent of the people's loyalty to Banda and the nature of the political climate developing at this time.

*Moto! Moto! Wayaka! Fire, fire is ablaze*  
*Moto, wayaka! Moto, wayaka! Fire is ablaze! Fire is ablaze!*  
*A Malawi? Malawians?*  
*Amalawi safuna: Malawians don't want:*  
*Chipembere, Kanyama Chipembere, Kanyama,*  
*Willie Chokani! Willie Chokani!*<sup>139</sup>

Open conflict between the LMY, the MYP, and pro-ministerial rebel supporters was soon forthcoming. At a meeting convened by ex-ministers in Zomba on 10 September, clashes erupted between groups of civil servants and villagers

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<sup>136</sup> Kayuni, H.M., Tambulasi, R.I., 'The Malawi 1964 cabinet crisis and its legacy of 'perpetual regression of trust' amongst contemporary Malawian politicians', *Social Dynamics*, 36:2, (2010), p.411.

<sup>137</sup> Banda's Young Pioneers were a paramilitary political organization that helped him transform Malawi into a single party state. Recruits studied Kamuzism, the 'teaching, philosophy and life of Ngwazi Dr Kamuzu Banda, Father and Founder of the Nation of Malawi.' By the late 1960s, there were approximately three thousand Young Pioneers, five hundred of whom received full military training. See BBC Interview with Thandika Mkandawire about Malawi's Journey to Independence, <http://woyingi.wordpress.com/category/africa-the-continent/countries-malawi/hastings-banda>, accessed 10 Oct., 2010.

<sup>138</sup> Banda quotes in Chirwa, 'Dancing Towards Dictatorship', p.10.

<sup>139</sup> Chirwa, 'Dancing towards dictatorship', p.7.

and pro-MCP activists. Conflict soon grew beyond police control; MCP offices in Zomba and national flags outside government buildings were set ablaze and government officials were brutally attacked.<sup>140</sup> The ex-ministers, meanwhile, gained knowledge their arrests were being planned. With reconciliation beyond the realms of possibility, they sought asylum abroad. The exception was Henry Chipembere, who remained in the country to plan an armed insurrection at Mangochi in February 1965, which, in the event, was heavily quashed by security forces en route to the capital city to take over the government.

Speaking later to Donal Brody about the events that transpired, Banda justified his actions in removing his former allies from the Cabinet by claiming that their 'jealousy' could not be tolerated. If permitted to continue, it would jeopardise the future of the nation.

These people [MCP Cabinet rebels] were great politicians, but they and others were infected with the African disease of jealousy and backbiting. These are contagious diseases. As the top people exhibit the symptoms, these diseases spread through families, organizations, churches and any place else where the virus is unleashed. So, this is what I became aware of; the tentacles of jealousy and backbiting silently and destructively beginning to make its way through Congress ... In some cases, the disease was, sadly for the nation, not curable. These people, as brilliant as they were and, in some cases, still are, could not leave the diseases of jealousy and backbiting "outside the door to the theatre" ... so they had to eventually go.<sup>141</sup>

As Colin Baker suggests, however, Banda's motivations were more likely to have been a response to the fear that his popular lieutenants would begin to mount an effective challenge of his leadership than they were a fear over the MCP's unity. For some time Banda had been aware of Chipembere's attempts to inherit for himself the mantle of 'minister for action' and had been keen for him to stop him from

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<sup>140</sup> Pike, J., *Malawi: a political and economic history* (London, 1968), p.168.

<sup>141</sup> Brody, D., 'Hastings Banda, A Biography', <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7693584/Dr-Banda-Biography1>, accessed 14 Dec., 2010.



gaining public influence as seen in late 1960. In June 1963 Chipembere again made a series of inflammatory speeches, encouraging action against 'stooges' and urging a more radical course that would necessitate the exclusion of all Europeans and non-MCP supporters from Nyasaland once independence had been achieved.<sup>142</sup> The violence that accompanied his public utterances not only indicated that Chipembere was capable of stirring people to action, but also threatened to destabilise the political situation, potentially jeopardising the progress made by the MCP. Already, Chipembere's actions had caused the European Civil Servants Association to petition the Secretary of State to take action to re-impose the rule of law.<sup>143</sup> This incensed Banda, who in the Legislative Assembly on 9 July argued vehemently that the actions of radicals were 'slowing down the march of Malawi to Freedom'.<sup>144</sup> Given the circumstances, it was perhaps no surprise that Banda was again anxious to seize upon the opportunity to isolate and expel 'dangerous men', such as Chipembere, from his government.

Banda's response to the cabinet crisis was to embark upon a programme to insulate his regime from potential opposition by clamping down on freedom of expression. This was aptly reflected in the enactment of the Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act 1968, which made it a criminal offence to publish anything likely to undermine public confidence in the government. The Act also regulated, controlled and minimized freedom of speech and entertainment.<sup>145</sup> As Cullen

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<sup>142</sup> NA, DO 183/34, Nyasaland Intelligence Report, Jul., 1963.

<sup>143</sup> Baker, *Chipembere*, p.60. For his part, Banda had been well aware of the course of events. Since February 1963 he had regularly received the monthly intelligence reports compiled by Special Branch.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> The Censorship Board created by the Act controlled the making and exhibition of cinema pictures, the importation, production, dissemination and possession of undesirable publications, pictures and records'. The Act also placed Malawi's only radio station under state ownership.

argues, the Act was to have a devastating effect on practice of parliamentary democracy. This was not only because of the loss of reflective ability by parliamentarians, but because it was subsequently considered dangerous to make a statement that might have been misinterpreted.<sup>146</sup> As Pascal Mwale remarked in interview with Jones and Manda, Banda's policies did little to indicate that Malawians had in fact achieved their freedom from colonial rule.

We simply replaced Governor-general Glyn Jones with our own Dr Banda. I say this because most of the policies were simply a continuation of what the colonial government had done Banda used colonial modes of governance in the sense that he didn't want people to question what he was doing, just like the British colonialists didn't want us to question their policies. The British viewed us as barbaric and themselves as civilized. In the same light, Banda viewed himself as intelligent ... as the more capable person ... he didn't think any other person could contribute to the formulation of better policies. So that is why he took a more or less solitary stance.<sup>147</sup>

In conjunction with altering the basis of MCP rule, the crisis also precipitated fundamental changes to Banda's preferred network of collaborators. Having initially sought their deposition during the anti-Federation struggle, Banda turned to the native authorities as a means to buttress his position. He strengthened the powers of the local, 'traditional', courts. Condemning the strict rules of evidence required in other countries, and praised Chewa law for taking a different view.<sup>148</sup> The Local Courts (Amendment) Act of 1969 further entrenched traditional authority by giving Banda statutory power to regulate and reconfigure the 'traditional' landscape according to his own agenda, providing him with effective sanctions to enmesh

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<sup>146</sup> Cullen, T., *Malawi. A Turning Point* (Cambridge, 1994), p.18.

<sup>147</sup> Mwale quote in Jones, A., Manda, D.L., 'Violence and 'othering' in colonial and postcolonial Africa. Case study: Banda's Malawi', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Volume 18, Issue 2, 2006, p.208.

<sup>148</sup> Professor Colin Baker, Witness seminar held at Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, 'The 'Westminster Model' and representative government in the era of decolonization', 25 May, 2011.

traditional elites in a web of patron–client relationships that in turn facilitated divide and rule strategies.<sup>149</sup>

For many historians, the Cabinet crisis and Banda's subsequent strengthening of legislation to limit opposition to his regime was a natural outcome of the inherent contradictions in Malawian nationalism that had been present since the early 1950s.<sup>150</sup> As Terence Ranger observed in June 1960, if his first impression had been of 'the strength and popularity of Malawi', his second was of 'Malawi's problems' that arose 'for the very fact that Malawi is a national movement containing within itself so many elements which under other circumstances would be competitive or hostile'.<sup>151</sup> In essence, Nyasaland nationalists had been held together by the anti-Federation struggle. Its removal thus presented a major problem for Banda and the MCP. As Du Chisiza recognised 'disengagement' from the anti-Federation struggle would mean that:

Disengagement from political action really means that the thousands of people who are engaged in the political struggle with us will suddenly find themselves without useful tasks to perform. It will, in a way be a sort of anticlimax for them – and anticlimax which, if mishandled, might easily deteriorate into disillusionment.<sup>152</sup>

In order to overcome such difficulties, the MCP attempted to create a common enemy against which the attentions and efforts of MCP members could be directed. It thus translated that after 1964 the ministerial rebels became men against whom

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<sup>149</sup> Hodder-Williams, R., 'Malawi's decade under Dr Banda', *The Round Table*, Volume 63, Issue 252, 1973, p.468. The Act also permitted specified Traditional Courts to try all types of criminal cases and to pass the death sentence, whilst removing the right guaranteed in the supposedly liberal constitution for defendants to appeal to the High Court. The Act further stipulated that defendants tried in Local Courts were debarred from employing defence counsel. The judicial function was to be performed by traditional leaders who would 'try cases according to what the president deemed to be traditional law and practice'.

<sup>150</sup> McCracken, 'Democracy and Nationalism', p.249.

<sup>151</sup> Ranger, T., 'Return to Malawi', *Dissent*, 9 Jun., 1960.

<sup>152</sup> NA, DO 183/136, Monthly Intelligence Report, Mar., 1962.

the party had to fight. Their legacy lived on through song and in stories; ‘it was ‘bad man Chipembere’ we were warned about in the early days’, Alile Puka stated in interview, ‘we were told that he wanted to kill our Kamuzu and that if we saw him or his supporters we must run and tell the authorities’.<sup>153</sup>

The minister’s revolt therefore drew into sharp focus the extent to which new ‘rebel enemies’ had replaced Federation as a focus for political activism. It also marked the shift to a Banda-centred political culture that was to alter the political landscape in Malawi for years to come.<sup>154</sup> Perhaps this was a response to the reverence with which Banda himself was held, or perhaps this reflected the very deep uncertainty that many felt over Malawi’s future. What it did show, however, was that the national edifice built by the MCP was arguably not strong enough to hold together disparate and competing elements in the Nyasaland polity once Federation had been removed. By 1966, Dr Banda had become the *Ngwazi*, the conqueror and the hero, the Lion of Malawi.<sup>155</sup> There was no separation of the presidency from the government, the party from its leader, the politics from the law, and the state from the nation. ‘Everywhere he went’, Short describes, ‘the machinery of party and government surrounded him with pomp and ceremony. His portrait adorned the walls of shops and offices, tee-shirts and national dress worn

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<sup>153</sup> Interview with Alile Puka, Zomba, 30 Aug., 2011. Puka is the daughter of a former LMW leader. She recalls that in her childhood, children were told stories of the ministerial rebels and their betrayal.

<sup>154</sup> Mchombo, S.. ‘Democratization in Malawi. Its roots and prospects’, in Gros, J., (ed), *Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa*, (London, 1998) p.21.

<sup>155</sup> *Ngwazi* (Conqueror), was a praise name from the Ngoni people, which indicated that apart from the meaning that he was brave and ferocious he was invincible: no one could harm or defeat Banda. When he brutalized his critics and opponents he was essentially demonstrating the fact that he was *Ngwazi*. Banda was also *Wamuyaya*, that is, president for life, indicating the potential of immortality. To some of his supporters this implied that his reign would last forever. The titles *Ngwazi* and *Wamuyaya* were included in his official titles preceding his name and were recited together with a litany of others each time Banda was addressed.

by members of the Women's League'.<sup>156</sup> A wealth of national institutions and facilities were established in Banda's name; Kamuzu International Airport, Kamuzu Stadium, Kamuzu Academy, and Kamuzu Central Hospital, whilst people were compelled to celebrate 'Kamuzu Day' and his Excellency's birthday. All these were fused and crystallized into Banda's personal political achievements and capabilities. Nobody else had the potential to offer an alternative.<sup>157</sup> For MCP propagandists, Banda, rather than the party, became Malawi's messiah, the MCP a vehicle through which Malawians could serve him. But the concentration of power in the hands of one man can, and in Malawi's case, did, lead to several problems that eroded the very basis on which mass nationalism had been built.

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<sup>156</sup> Short, *Banda*, p.282.

<sup>157</sup> As quoted in Lwanda, *Kamuzu of Malawi*, p.122.

# 5

## *UNIP, the ANC and the Transition to Independence in Northern Rhodesia, 1959-64*

As the previous chapter has shown, the years 1959-64 arguably represented the most significant phase in the history of nationalism in Nyasaland. By 1964 there was little doubt that 'nationalism', in the sense that the majority of Africans in the territory subscribed to the MCP's vision of the 'nation', participating in joint action to bring about a greater Malawi in as expedient a manner as possible, genuinely existed. In the short space of five years, Nyasaland's Malawi Congress Party [MCP] had succeeded in transforming the political landscape. This chapter will endeavour to build upon some of the themes established in chapter four in relation to Northern Rhodesia. What will be noted, however, is that whilst the trajectory of nationalism in both territories generally followed a similar course, nationalists in Northern Rhodesia struggled to engender the sympathies of officials in the Colonial Office in spite of their post-1959 commitment to constitutional advance. The political situation was further complicated by the existence of two major nationalist parties vying for supremacy: Harry Nkumbula's African National Congress [ANC] and Kenneth Kaunda's Zambia African National Congress [ZANC], which later became

the United National Independence Party [UNIP], in October 1959. It is the intention of this chapter to account for the development of nationalist politics between 1959 and 1964, identifying why UNIP rather than the ANC became Zambia's first party of government at independence and how, during this period, UNIP was able to win the support, not only of a vast number of Africans, but the British government too.

### *The Banning of ZANC and Nationalist Mobilisation in Northern Rhodesia, 1959*

The increase in nationalist agitation that took place in Nyasaland in late 1958 was mirrored in Northern Rhodesia. In its first few months, ZANC's growth was slow; initial support for the party was small and its activities limited to Luapula and Northern Provinces, the Broken Hill area of the Central Province and Ndola in the Copperbelt Province.<sup>1</sup> In late 1958, ZANC lacked both time and resources to organise extensively throughout the territory, a predicament made worse by a lack of publicity given to the party in the press.<sup>2</sup> On 25 December, ZANC's General Secretary, Munu Sipalo, emphasised the need for ZANC to adopt a new, far-reaching, inclusive national programme. Continued opposition to Federation had not in itself been sufficient to cause its removal. The only way in which it could be dismembered was by uniting the African people behind a truly 'national' ideal.<sup>3</sup> His comments marked an important turning point for his party. Thereafter, ZANC organisational tactics shifted. Whilst the emphasis on local grievances continued to be seen as an important means to build Congress prestige, it was the achievement

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<sup>1</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.78.

<sup>2</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/7/7, Box 15, Mainza Chona to Fox-Pitt, 22 Dec., 1959. As Mainza Chona told Thomas Fox-Pitt, 'there was never a time when a reporter came to a ZANC meeting'.

<sup>3</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/21, General Secretary's Report on the State of the Party, 25 Dec., 1958.

of an independent Zambia, rather than the removal of Federation, that became the central platform in ZANC's mobilisation message. Only by the attainment of independence, under a ZANC government, could Africans be freed from oppressive white rule. In interview, Solomon Mwamba, a former UNIP activist in Lusaka in the mid-1960s, remarked that ZANC's new national appeal was a powerful ideal, one that stirred Africans from 'laziness' and political inactivity. When asked if people genuinely understood ZANC's anti-Federation campaign, Mwamba shook his head. 'No', he remarked, 'but Zambia, that was different. When people came to our village and told us that this Federation was stopping us from being free, and when these people told us that if we bought a ZANC card we would belong to Zambia, that was a powerful thing. We realised then that the Federation was truly bad as it was the only thing that stood between us and achieving our release from slavery as true children of Zambia'.<sup>4</sup> Even the politically uncommitted could hardly fail to notice a change in political style. Political meetings became, remarked Chibesa Kampo in interview, not only a gathering to hear leaders speak, but an occasion to wear uniforms, a time for choral groups to sing songs of freedom and, above all, a time to develop a sense of aggressiveness and assertiveness. Each story and each meeting reinforced a central idea, 'that we were better together than apart', a recognition that ZANC's predecessor, the ANC, had failed to unite the people against the Federation.<sup>5</sup>

In conjunction with a shift in political emphasis, ZANC's immediate objectives in early 1959 were to prepare for the boycott campaign for the Benson elections, scheduled for March. 'It provoked us to launch a big propaganda

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Solomon Mwamba, a former UNIP organiser, Lusaka, 20 Sept., 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Chibesa Kampo, former African miner in Luanshya, Lusaka, 22 Sept., 2011.



campaign', Robert Makasa recalled, 'every party official went out to recruit', using any means available to carry out the assignment. The phrase, 'I can't', Makasa said, was 'unknown to us'.<sup>6</sup> As previously under the ANC, the renewed mobilisation drive hinged upon the capacity of party officials to involve local people in the organisation of political activities. Before ZANC's formation, organisation at levels lower than the provincial administration was rather weak. Most political work was carried out by 'professional politicians' from the higher echelons of the party, many of whom had little or no affiliation with the socio-economic fabric of the area in which they operated. It was unsurprising therefore, that one of the first initiatives of ZANC's national leadership was to build the new party's profile at grass-roots.

Organisation in urban areas was greatly facilitated by the recently created Area Boards, set up by the Northern Rhodesian government to provide a forum for African grievances in townships. Not only was there an overlap between local ZANC leaders and Area Board representatives, but the Area Board system of representation conveniently sub-divided townships into small wards, or political units, each with their own representatives. As political techniques grew more sophisticated, it was only a small step for ZANC organisers to take an existing ward, with its own sense of political identity, and break this area down into small sub-units. Local branch leaders were then able to assign section leaders a sub-unit each, which they were then expected to 'organise' through frequent meetings. During these meetings, organisers were told to explain to attendees three main points: first, why ZANC had broken from the ANC; second, to explain why the party rejected the constitutional proposals put forward by the Governor; and third, that

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<sup>6</sup> Makasa, *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*, p.99.

the boycott of the elections to be held under the controversial Benson Constitution franchise would go some way towards the eventual achievement of a free 'Zambia'.<sup>7</sup> As Kaunda explains, ZANC mobilisation was thus a highly planned operation:

Every morning we met to report on the previous night's successes and failures and then we would draw up the new scheme of work for the day. Where there had been success, we knew there was less need for concentration, except to check on the appointed organisers from time to time. Even if we were out of the headquarters there would always be someone junior to receive reports and report back to us. Our slogans became very popular. We invented and introduced easy slogans so that all our followers could repeat them. The more people you had shouting them the better for the popularity and membership campaign of the party. Within a few weeks, we grew to something very considerable.<sup>8</sup>

Such tactics stood in stark contrast to methods employed by Harry Nkumbula's African National Congress. Whilst the ANC was able to organise and to draw support from its traditional support base in the Southern Province, neither its organisational techniques nor its political style were sufficient to capture the attention of urban residents in the north. The party continued to rely largely upon the drama of the public meeting and the interest generated by national leaders coming to a locally organised rally. When the visits of national leaders were not forthcoming, testified by the sheer number of requests for leaders to tour the localities by local ANC members, party supporters had little incentive to organise.<sup>9</sup> As anthropologist Peter Harries-Jones recalled whilst conducting fieldwork in Northern Rhodesia in the early 1960s, outside the Southern and Central Provinces, day to day campaigning by the ANC was 'not particularly onerous'. Those making contacts or selling cards were only expected to cover ten houses per day and even

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<sup>7</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.53.

<sup>8</sup> Kaunda, *Zambia*, p.99.

<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/1, Bright Syavanta, District Secretary, Livingstone, to General Secretary, 12 Oct., 1959.

then, the sheer size of some townships prohibited ANC teams from being able to organise membership effectively.<sup>10</sup> The chapter will return to the theme of the ANC's continuing presence in the Northern Rhodesian polity, and its role in shaping the national agenda, later. What is crucial to note at this juncture, however, is that ZANC, perhaps by virtue of its desire to make an immediate impact on the political scene, was certainly the more active of the two nationalist parties in operation.

ZANC's success in numerical terms was difficult to gauge since the registration of ZANC branches under the Societies Ordinance, the main tool for controlling nationalist parties, had not kept pace with its branch formation. The party was, nonetheless, considered by the Northern Rhodesian authorities as a potent threat to peace and stability in the territories. In the opinion of Governor Arthur Benson, the party's anti-election campaign had severely undermined government efforts to register African voters, with figures at the close of registration still far below initial estimations. By February, only 6,821 Africans had been registered as 'special' voters, while just 796 Africans had been listed as 'ordinary' voters.<sup>11</sup> 'Zambia', argued Governor Benson, had caused 'great unrest' in the territory, spreading 'uncertainty and fear' among Africans. Its role in instituting a 'reign of terror' in the villages and towns at night, he said, had placed men 'in fear of their lives'.<sup>12</sup> This was not necessarily a true representation of the situation, but it nevertheless pointed to a deep suspicion of ZANC's activities.

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<sup>10</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.52.

<sup>11</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.84. Figures at the close of registration were still far below the Government's targets. A total of only 6,821 Africans registered as 'special' voters, while only 796 Africans qualified as 'ordinary' voters.

<sup>12</sup> RH, AB 245/16, Broadcast by the Governor of Northern Rhodesia, 12 Mar., 1959.

Under pressure from Welensky, who urged Benson to launch 'a full scale onslaught' on disruptive forces in Northern Rhodesia, banning orders were issued against ZANC on 11 March under section 21 of the Societies Ordinance and the party's leaders were promptly rounded up and sent into internal exile.<sup>13</sup> Scattered outbreaks of unrest followed in parts of Central, Copperbelt, Northern and Luapula Provinces, with over 40 reported instances of arson alone by the end of the month.<sup>14</sup> The subsequent 'Benson' elections passed without major incident, and, as expected, Welensky's United Federal Party swept the board winning 13 of the 22 elected seats, 11 'ordinary', and both African reserved seats. Harry Nkumbula, whose party was now regarded by the authorities as the lesser of two evils, won the South-Western seat for ANC, taking up a position on the territory's Legislative Council following his nomination by the Northern Rhodesian government. Whilst ZANC had not made substantial gains during its short existence, it left an indelible imprint upon African politics.<sup>15</sup> Having fought so hard to make their voices heard ZANC's supporters were unlikely to be silenced for long. As Kenneth Kaunda predicted in a letter to his supporters in April 1959,

They have banned the great name of Zambia but the greater name of *freedom now* is spiritual. It is beyond their reach and so they cannot ban it. We shall organise our people when we get out of detention in the name of *freedom now*. Africa, our mother must be free and it has fallen to our lot to free this part. Be of good cheer, we are just beginning.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> NA, CO 1015/2034, Welensky to Benson, 5 Mar., 1959.

<sup>14</sup> NA, CO 1015/2527, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Apr., 1959.

<sup>15</sup> Referring to the *Ridley Report*, a report commissioned to investigate the reasons for the banning of the Zambia Congress, Mulford suggests that the Party was comparatively weak at this stage of its development. Despite ZANC's propaganda and the militant outbursts of its leaders, ZANC was not well enough organised to precipitate major violence. Mulford, D., *Zambia*, p.45.

<sup>16</sup> Kaunda quote taken from Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.303.

*The African National Congress, the United National Independence Party and the Re-Emergence of African Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia, 1959-1961*

The banning of the Zambia Congress temporarily threw nationalist politics into disarray.<sup>17</sup> African politicians not in exile struggled to come to terms with the new political situation and, subsequently, were largely unsuccessful in their attempts to organise a single, unified, political movement capable of replacing the old party. As Makasa suggests, political fervour at this time was kept alive by ZANC's underground supporters.

[After the banning of ZANC], posters and letters were pasted on buses, trees and public buildings which read, 'ZANC is finished'. What the racist imperialist government did not realise was that the party had a lot of support right from grass root level to the top. Our 'orphaned' members decided to go underground where they organised themselves into small tight groups which carried out a lot of activities which kept the colonial police gangsters on their toes. When the posters appeared reading 'ZANC is finished' they would go out at night and erase the words 'is finished' so that the following day the public found the word 'ZANC' wherever such posters had appeared!<sup>18</sup>

Whilst their impact was generally limited, the actions of ZANC orphans indicated that there existed a cohort of committed ZANC members that the authorities had failed to press into submission. The formation of the United National Independence Party in August following the merger of the United National Freedom Party [UNFP] and the African National Independence Party [ANIP], both established in mid-1959 in response to ZANC's proscription, marked a crucial turning point for African nationalists unwilling to re-join the ANC. Led initially by Dixon Konkola and Paul Kalichini, the new party's prospects were greatly enhanced following yet another split in the ANC in October 1959 which saw 120 ANC members, including the

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<sup>17</sup> NA, CO 1015/2527, Evelyn Hone, Governor of Northern Rhodesia, to Iain Macleod, Colonial Secretary, 17 Aug., 1960.

<sup>18</sup> Makasa, *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*, p.130.

influential Titus Mukupo and Mainza Chona, join UNIP in protest over Nkumbula's failure to support African bus boycotts in Lusaka. Of more immediate significance, however, was his reluctance to preside over the unification of all African political movements in furtherance of the national cause.<sup>19</sup> The chapter will return to examine the effects of the split on the ANC later, but suffice to say, UNIP's acquisition of a cadre of seasoned political leaders and their ANC branches came at a crucial time. It not only provided the party with experienced politicians, but it also gave UNIP access to ANC branch resources.

For many within UNIP, the ANC split again brought into sharp focus the need to build a strong, organised, nationalist movement with its support base rooted in the localities. Lacking both the finances and reputation to substantially increase party membership, UNIP leaders attempted to pick up where ZANC had left off, implementing plans for an ambitious cultural mobilisation programme which aimed to place the party at the centre of everyday life.<sup>20</sup> But a change in political style, even if accompanied by the blending of 'national' with local concerns was insufficient to sustain a drawn out battle for independence, especially when the latter called for a political following which could be relied upon to demonstrate en masse when summoned to do so. The real constitutional fight, remarked Munu Sipalo, UNIP's Secretary General, would be fought in homes and villages. It was here that strength would be needed to resist attempts to divide the party 'by the deliberate creation of conditions which command the suspension of your judgement and your unanimous support for the imposed Federation

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<sup>19</sup> In November, a conference of unification was convened to agree on interim office bearers to lead the new party until Kaunda's release. Chona became UNIP's President-General.

<sup>20</sup> BL, EAP 121, U[nited] N[ational] I[ndependence] P[arty] Papers 1/1/3, UNIP Meeting held in Lusaka, 28 Jan., 1960.

Government'.<sup>21</sup> UNIP leaders would therefore endeavour to bring all Africans in the localities into as intimate a relationship as possible with the centre. As a Central Committee Report advocated, UNIP must become an integral part of African life.

Let every family have a feeling that each married man in the family is some sort of chairman; each woman some sort of secretary and each first born some sort of treasurer in their organisation, linking up with the neighbouring families, then the village unit, branch, constituency, the region and then the full party and finally the country as a whole.<sup>22</sup>

The concern for effective organisation persisted among UNIP's top leaders, who, shortly after Kaunda's release from prison in January 1960 and his subsequent confirmation as UNIP's President, were active along the 'line of rail' and in the Luapula, Northern, and Eastern Provinces.<sup>23</sup> In late February, some of UNIP's senior leaders, including Sipalo, Simon Kapwepwe and Sikota Wina, toured Luapula Province for the purpose of establishing UNIP on a firm basis. On 19 February they addressed a conference in Chief Mulambo's area in Fort Rosebery District, attended by approximately 150 delegates from all over the province. Referring to the formation of provincial, constituency, and branch-level committees, Wina explained that the principle of electing local UNIP officials would be discontinued, because it had in the past resulted in weak leadership at lower levels in nationalist organisations. Officials at all levels would now be selected by the provincial leaders and approved by UNIP headquarters.<sup>24</sup> Any leader who showed weakness or disregarded the authority of UNIP headquarters, warned Wina, would be expelled from the party. Throughout the tour, all three leaders consistently advocated the need for provincial party officials and their subordinates at lower levels to improve

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<sup>21</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/1/1/12, Sipalo UNIP Circular to UNIP Divisional Presidents, 26 Apr., 1961.

<sup>22</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 8/1/1, Central Committee Report to UNIP's National Council, Mar., 1961.

<sup>23</sup> Vickery, 'The Odd Man Out: Dixon Konkola', pp.130-131.

<sup>24</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/2/1/8, UNIP Report on Tour of Luapula Province, 1 Mar., 1960.

administrative standards. Party membership registers, financial records, and the regular reporting of provincial developments to UNIP headquarters were singled out as the most essential tasks, all of which required immediate and continuing attention. The objective, Kaunda wrote, was to make UNIP the mouthpiece of all the people', to ensure that the party represented all that it purported to represent, 'so that each and every one would be ready to suffer, if necessary, together, in the cause of freedom'.<sup>25</sup>

Building upon ZANC's early work, the formation of political cells or 'sections', which began in urban townships in early-1961, became a central feature of UNIP's attempts to improve party organisation at the local level. Essentially small committees of local UNIP supporters which met on a frequent basis, 'sections' were given official recognition by party leaders as a key means by which UNIP could recruit at the neighbourhood level whilst at the same time providing a means by which existing members could be instructed about UNIP's policy.<sup>26</sup> In his study of UNIP politics in Mikomfwa, Harries-Jones described the process of section formation.

Returning to Mikomfwa, organisers went through the township talking to those they knew to be loyal to the party. Those contacted were to communicate the information to relatives or others known to be politically reliable. When 10 to 15 people had agreed to form a committee, the neighbourhood contact made arrangements to meet in a particular house—usually his own—to hold their first discussion. The organiser attended this first meeting to repeat the reason why it was necessary to form sections, emphasising that it was UNIP's goal to make everyone a party card holder. Each of the 10 to 15 people was urged to strengthen the newly formed section by going out and enrolling five other members ... If section attendance began to rise in any one section, and meetings threatened to overflow outside, the section split in two.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Kaunda, *Zambia*, p.154.

<sup>26</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/4/1, UNIP Circular to UNIP Copperbelt Division, Luanshya, 12 Dec., 1961.

<sup>27</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.59.



In order to boost section productivity, the branch, which oversaw section activities, could play upon an element of competition among the sections. Generally each section wished to be known for being strong in section affairs and was anxious that its inactivity did not become a matter of public knowledge among other sections. At the very least, such public knowledge would lead to the section and its officials being termed 'useless'. As Harries-Jones suggests, UNIP activists at this time were highly sophisticated. The tactics developed were not those of a new party with little experience in political organisation. Rather, they represented a party determined to win the support of the people, driven by a new objective which, it was hoped, would bring together Africans against the colonial state.

Improvements in party organisation undoubtedly provided a useful framework around which UNIP's popular mobilisation campaign could be built. Similar to the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain in Guinea, UNIP's drive to win new adherents was rooted in the extent to which the party could make its present felt at every level of society.<sup>28</sup> As Anne McClintock contends, in regions in which the percentage of literate Africans was relatively small and the circulation of political propaganda limited, it was imperative that grievances, demands and political messages were transmitted to the masses through oral, visual and practical means.<sup>29</sup> As expected, mass political meetings thus continued to play an integral part of this early mobilisation process.<sup>30</sup> Writing to his friend Roy Welensky, the Federal Prime Minister, following a UNIP meeting on his Shiwa Ngandu estate in

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<sup>28</sup> Schmidt, 'Top Down or Bottom Up?', p.980.

<sup>29</sup> McClintock, A., 'No Longer a Future in Heaven': Women and Nationalism in South Africa', in Eley, G., Suny, R., *Becoming National: A Reader*, (London, 1996), p.273-4.

<sup>30</sup> See for instance BL, EAP 121, UNIP 1/1/3, Third Session of the National Council of UNIP, Lusaka, 18 Jan., 1961. As Kaunda told his supporters in January 1961, local UNIP organisers had special responsibility to 'go back' and 'tell our people what they are supposed to do'.

April 1960, Stewart Gore-Browne, a former member for African interests on the Legislative Council remarked of the impact UNIP meetings exerted on the locals:

You may, perhaps, smile but it was very moving, and I wonder if people, white or black, who regard this as something just worked up by a handful of agitators for their own end, have any real idea of what it means ... If that is happening in a quiet place like this, where we boast that we don't know what the word 'Politics' means, it makes one wonder what the feeling is all over the country and in the industrial parts, and what the reaction will be to the big changes happening, or rather about to happen, close by.<sup>31</sup>

This was not a mere gathering of people but a sincere event, more like a 'church service', which gave Africans a true insight into their importance to the national struggle. As Chona remarked in a UNIP circular, creating a collective spirit among the people would not only create a stronger movement for independence, but would also ensure that the party would not die in the event of another instance of a state clampdown on African political activity. There would be many arrests, many trials, many imprisonments and many appeals in the forthcoming months, but so long as people remained committed to UNIP's cause they would achieve Zambia's freedom.<sup>32</sup>

Arguably the most notable manifestation of UNIP attempts to popularise its appeal for new nationhood by placing the party at the centre of African society was the UNIP Funeral Committee, a burial society set-up on the Copperbelt in early 1963 to manage, organise and lead African burials. Initially received with great enthusiasm, the Committee, Kaunda stated, was to be for 'all people of Zambia, UNIP members and non-UNIP members alike'.<sup>33</sup> Crowds of between 4,000 and 5,000 were common, and whilst large funeral processions permitted a

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<sup>31</sup> RH, WP 618/4, Gore-Browne to Welensky, 17 Apr., 1960.

<sup>32</sup> BL, EAP 121, 5/1/1/12, Mainza Chona, Circular to UNIP Members, 26 Jul., 1960.

<sup>33</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.99.

demonstration of party strength, as well as providing a suitable occasion to honour the departed, they crucially provided an opportunity to propagate the UNIP message. Following the institution of the Funeral Committee, the call to honour the dead was no longer signalled solely by the mourning cries of near relatives. It was transmitted by the Funeral Committee throughout UNIP sections on the night before burial, implied in the speech at the graveside by the party's representatives, and repeated by the UNIP Choir during the funeral procession. Songs sung at the funeral, for example, moved from traditional refrains for the dead into political verse:

*'Ba Kaunda naba Kapwepwe / Pokoleni calo kumbunu / Nkumbula asekela / mumulopa umwingi'* (Kaunda and Kapwepwe will take back the country from the White man. Nkumbula is only happy with a great deal of your blood).<sup>34</sup>

The forthright political overtones served only to heighten the importance of the spirit of the deceased. The Funeral Committee also collected wood for the mourning fires, paid for telegrams to the dead man's relatives advising them of the burial, and ensured that cars went to pick up relatives for the funeral. By virtue of its participation in funerary rites, the party began to exercise a role in which a political group enacted the part of the uterine brother. UNIP's Funeral Committee became the 'master of ceremonies', the nearest male relative who organises the committing of the body to the grave.

Although in many respects the rituals performed during the burial were entirely non-political in content, they played an essential role in linking the party to conduct of civil society. Keeping a record of attendees, for example, not only allowed the party to keep in close touch with UNIP members, but allowed party

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.104.

organisers to create new constituents by sending invitations to non-UNIP mourners to join UNIP. Perhaps most importantly, as Walima Kalusa observes, political administrative duties of this nature allowed UNIP political entrepreneurs to publicly display their familiarity with the administrative procedures of the colonial state, and hence their own ability to rule.<sup>35</sup> Funerals thus not only became an important means by which party organisers could emphasise UNIP's presence everyday life, but also a means by which the party could convert mourners into patriots, laying claim to their time, their resources and loyalty, and in return, promise them political freedom in an independent nation-state. Perhaps more significantly, appropriation of local customs such as funerals was also a way of creating the notion that participation within the party offered authority within the local community and the promise of future reward. As Harries-Jones concludes, the Funeral Committee was a committee of the party, the organisation of a funeral was a party reward to the faithful, and the 'composition of the obituary' a means of mobilising mass political support. To labour for freedom was also deemed to be working for the common good.<sup>36</sup>

Throughout the early 1960's, UNIP made significant advances in Northern Rhodesia. The party had made concerted attempts to broaden its national programme and had been successful in rebuilding a membership base from which it could begin to mount an intensive campaign for African self-government under an expanded Northern Rhodesian franchise.<sup>37</sup> Though UNIP's strength varied in

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<sup>35</sup> Kalusa, W.T., 'Death, Christianity, and African Miners: Contesting Indirect Rule in the Zambian Copperbelt, 1935-1962', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 1 Jan., 2011, pp.1-38.

<sup>36</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.106.

<sup>37</sup> *Northern Rhodesia Africa News Survey*, published by UNIP International and Publicity Bureau, vol. 1, No. 7, 28 Oct., 1960. The article mentioned that the Monckton Report was 'unsatisfactory' in that

different areas, branches had been established in every province, including Barotseland, which had previously remained isolated from politics. UNIP's attempts to pursue a national agenda had also begun to win some support among Europeans, with both James Skinner, a Lusaka lawyer, and Merfyn Temple, a Methodist minister, joining the party in December.<sup>38</sup> By UNIP's own estimates, the party had a membership of 154,523 in 961 branches, with over 69,000 from the Luapula Province alone, where UNIP activists had been most active organising sections.<sup>39</sup> These figures represented an impressive increase from those given by UNIP Secretary General to the Emergency Conference of UNIP in September 1960, which estimated that membership stood at 67,590.<sup>40</sup>

### *The ANC and the Roots of Authoritarian Nationalism, 1959-61*

UNIP's rise to the fore of African politics was in large part facilitated by the decline of Nkumbula's ANC following the defection of the Titus Mukupo-Mainza Chona faction in 1959. Initial reactions to the formation of UNIP reflected the increasing frustration with which ANC activists had come to view the situation. Nkumbula blamed his 'ambitious opponents' for tearing apart the solidarity of the African movements against colonialism, and his colleagues criticised UNIP as 'devil spirited', being no more than a party of 'juvenile delinquents'.<sup>41</sup> In 1960, the ANC registered only 21 branches during the entire year and membership numbers by January 1961

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it suggested 'a number of 'too little and too late' half-measures by which the Commissioners hope to regain African support for the hatred union'.

<sup>38</sup> *Northern News*, 1 Dec., 1960.

<sup>39</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 1/1/3, Third Session of the National Council of UNIP, Lusaka, 18 Jan., 1961. See UNIP 3/1/1, Report to the Emergency Conference of UNIP, 3-4 Sept., 1960.

<sup>40</sup> UNIP 3/1/1, Report to the Emergency Conference of UNIP, 3-4 Sept., 1960.

<sup>41</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/3, Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the National Assembly of the ANC, Lusaka, 14 Apr., 1960. See also ANC 7/65, J.V. Kasonde, *Week by Week*, 18 Feb., 1961.

were estimated to stand at less than at 60,000, half of UNIP's.<sup>42</sup> ANC leaders complained that the party was beginning to lose publicity, with the press no longer reporting on ANC meetings. 'It is a sad state of affairs', Job Michello, ANC's National Secretary wrote to the Secretary of the Africa Bureau, 'that the local press has completely disregarded us in favour of Mr. Kaunda'.<sup>43</sup> The ANC's prospects were made worse in September, when Nkumbula was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment on a charge of dangerous driving, following the death of an African constable.<sup>44</sup>

The haemorrhage of members and subscribers to UNIP gave rise to insurmountable financial problems that crippled the party's effectiveness at both the national and provincial levels.<sup>45</sup> In several letters written to his colleagues following a tour of the Copperbelt in early 1960, the ANC's Secretary General Job Michello alluded to the daily struggle of party activists, many of whom lacked the tools necessary to organise and mobilise and were in desperate need of propaganda.<sup>46</sup> While Lusaka-based leaders could not tour the country as much as the threat posed by UNIP would have warranted, provincial officials had to cope with insufficient resources and the erratic payment of personal allowances and emoluments. In UNIP-dominated regions, where the costs and risks of political involvement were even higher than elsewhere, provincial officials were 'hard to

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<sup>42</sup> NA, CO 1015/2527, Evelyn Hone, Governor of Northern Rhodesia, to Iain Macleod, Colonial Secretary, 17 Aug., 1960.

<sup>43</sup> RH, AB 245/14, Michello to Secretary of the Africa Bureau, 28 Jan., 1960.

<sup>44</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.175.

<sup>45</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/9, W.K. Jere, National Treasurer, to J.S. Msimuko, ANC South Africa, undated, 1960. The ANC's treasurer wrote to potential sympathisers elsewhere to 'appeal very strongly' for funds in the sum of either £20 or £30 to prevent the party from bankruptcy.

<sup>46</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/12, Job Michello to Berings Lombe, 14 Feb., 1960.

find and harder to retain'.<sup>47</sup> 'Most new appointees would routinely hand in their notices after a few months in office or, at best, request a transfer to a less demanding area'.<sup>48</sup> Letters to ANC headquarters complaining that the ANC were 'not amongst the chosen flock' were characteristic of those received from across the territory.<sup>49</sup> In addition, many party activists in the localities lamented the lack of leadership from the centre. In March 1961, Samson Chiphazi of the Lusaka District wrote to the ANC's General Secretary complaining that he did not know what was happening throughout Northern Rhodesia and, as such, he was precluded from engaging in political activities. Chiphazi's letter was indicative of innumerable requests sent by ANC members requesting that party leaders take a more active role in Northern Rhodesian politics.<sup>50</sup> Exceptions to the rule were those officials operating in ANC strongholds in parts of Central and Southern Provinces who enjoyed a far easier time.

To concur with Giacomo Macola, the ANC's appeal was undoubtedly diminished by the failure of its leaders to find a coherent political philosophy to distinguish itself from UNIP. For more than two years after the formation of ZANC, the ANC leadership appeared to be 'groping in the dark', sending mixed messages to the future electorate and losing valuable ground to its rival.<sup>51</sup> In January 1961, for instance, the ANC attempted to attack UNIP's national credentials by calling into question its policy of 'multiracialism', accusing the party of 'imperialist leanings'.

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<sup>47</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.83.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/69, Albert R. Bwalia, Provincial Youth Organiser, Central Province, to National Secretary, 7 Apr., 1961.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, Samson Chiphazi, Neganega, Lusaka District, to ANC General Secretary, 30 Mar., 1961.. See for instance, ANC 2/1, Joel Lwitila, Mpili Mission, Lusaka, to Nkumbula, 23 Sept., 1959 and also, Bright Syavanta, District Secretary, Livingstone, to General Secretary, 12 Oct., 1959.

<sup>51</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.80.

‘They are trying to please two masters’, wrote Nkumbula’s deputy, John Banda, ‘we have one master to please, the AFRICAN’.<sup>52</sup> The contradictions inherent in Banda’s statement were obvious, especially since Nkumbula was widely accused of being a government ‘stooge’ following his appointment to the Legislative Council in 1959. It was arguably not until June 1961, when the party refused to join with UNIP in condemning the Macleod constitutional proposals that the ANC, by then under the interim leadership of former African Mine Workers Union President Lawrence Katilungu, showed signs of developing a coherent political ideology. By disassociating itself from the on-going protest, the ANC indicated that it was becoming a moderate, right of centre party.<sup>53</sup> This came to be reflected in the party’s attacks upon UNIP’s connections with Russia, with whom Kaunda had allegedly entered an agreement to guarantee control of the copper mines after independence in return for financial aid.<sup>54</sup> This stance, which rather ironically echoed Welensky’s accusations of ANC links with Communist forces in the late 1950s, gave the ANC an ‘incontrovertible badge of moderation’, a political programme, and provided it with a chance to dispute Kaunda’s much publicised commitment to non-violence.<sup>55</sup>

Given the extent of the ANC’s mounting problems, it is somewhat surprising that the party continued to play an important role in African politics. Throughout this period, its survival owed much to several factors. The fact that the ANC lost a bulk of its support to ZANC in Northern, Luapula and North-Western Provinces, for instance, forced the party to reconcile with the cohort of wealthy peasant farmers

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<sup>52</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/93, ANC Press Statement, 24 Jan., 1961.

<sup>53</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.86.

<sup>54</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/5, Job Michello to Peter Mwewa, Chief Chabula, Luwingu, 4 Sept., 1961.

<sup>55</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.80.



in the Southern Province whom the party had previously tried to discourage from participating in government sponsored agricultural development programmes.<sup>56</sup> It subsequently stopped its 'smear' campaigns against rich peasants who were members of the Southern Province African Farming Improvement Scheme, embarking upon a major reorganisation of the party throughout the Province in order to win the backing of those whose membership subscriptions would prove vital in continuing to finance the ailing party. It was perhaps the ANC's international marginalisation at the Accra Conference, however, that proved most significant in forcing Nkumbula into a position which guaranteed the ANC's short-term survival. Having been shunned by Ghana's President, Kwame Nkrumah, and Hastings Banda at the All Africa People's Conference, Nkumbula was instead compelled to seek an alliance with Moise Tshombe, the President of the secessionist regime in Katanga. Whilst Nkumbula had been 'hurt' by the decision of his former friends to lend their support to Kaunda, his disappointment was short lived.<sup>57</sup> In mid-1960, Tshombe informed Nkumbula that he was prepared to use his resources to ease the ANC's diplomatic isolation by ensuring the installation of a friendly government across the border. Following the meeting, a line of communication was opened between the ANC and Tshombe's party, the former establishing an office in Katanga under the stewardship of Berrings Lombe, the ANC Deputy National Secretary. Whilst the alliance provided Nkumbula with an influential ally it also provided his party with crucial financial aid upon which the ANC came to rely for its existence. In 1961 alone, it was estimated that Tshombe provided the party with over £14,000 and six

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<sup>56</sup> Momba, 'Peasant Differentiation and Rural Party Politics', p.292. Momba argues that UNIP tended to ignore the interests of the dominant social groups in the countryside.

<sup>57</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/37, Nkumbula to Labour MP James Markham, 13 Jan., 1959.

Land Rovers. By February 1962, the *Central African Mail* reported that Lombe's work in Elisabethville and the Congress' ever more open professions of support for Kantangese secession resulted in donations amounting to as much as £25,000.<sup>58</sup>

The ANC's presence presented somewhat of an ideological dilemma for UNIP in the early 1960s. From the very outset, UNIP leaders were convinced that 'the future was theirs'<sup>59</sup>; its political programme underlined its ambitions: UNIP was the *only* party that commanded the 'respect confidence and unanimous support of the people' and only by joining the party would African ambitions for a greater Zambia be achieved.<sup>60</sup> The continued existence of the ANC, therefore, threatened and undermined UNIP's ambitions. UNIP's immediate response was to deny Nkumbula and the ANC full rights to political citizenship in the new national dispensation then taking root in Northern Rhodesia. This resulted in a series of spiteful attacks against Nkumbula and the ANC. Nkumbula was 'finished', an 'alcoholic wreck' with no 'intelligent' following, whilst his party were 'morally bankrupt' and only survived because they were content to 'dance to the tune of the imperialist puppet Tshombe'.<sup>61</sup> These attacks reached their climax with the 'Catalogue of Nkumbula's political masturbation', an 'incendiary pamphlet' issued by the divisional headquarters of UNIP in the Southern Province.<sup>62</sup> In a damning indictment of Nkumbula it labelled the former nationalist messiah a 'political rat', a 'gangster', a 'hopeless and thinkless [sic] rotting [sic] politician' who 'delayed our

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<sup>58</sup> *Central African Mail*, 27 Feb., 1962.

<sup>59</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.74.

<sup>60</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/15, Memorandum on Constitutional Changes, submitted to Hone, 24 Nov., 1959.

<sup>61</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/15, Nephas Tembo, 'Copperbelt Circular no. 5. Organ of UNIP – Western Division', Mar., 1960 see also UNIP 6/7/3, M. Sipalo to Q. Armah, 27 Feb., 1961.

<sup>62</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.75.

freedom'. In these circumstances, 'thank God', UNIP had come to 'save our lot from entering into Harry's Kingdom of tribalism, idiocy, drunkenness, uselessness and thinklessness [*sic*]'.<sup>63</sup>

In adopting such a stance towards its political rivals, Macola argues, UNIP embarked on a 'dangerous intellectual trajectory', the endpoint of which was the 'vindication of intolerance, not only for open political opposition, but for independent expressions of civil society as well'.<sup>64</sup> Kaunda's subsequent insistence upon 'absolute unity' and the consistent restatement of UNIP's mission to 'save the people of Zambia' thus reflected the party's attempts to assert itself over the ANC, providing UNIP's lower echelons with the scope to popularise a monolithic vision of Zambian society with little room for alternative views.<sup>65</sup> The principle contribution of the ANC to the political landscape at this time, therefore, was to consolidate within UNIP ranks the adoption of an exclusivist national agenda, which condoned violence and intimidation as a means to buttress UNIP's domination. This was to find its most prominent expression in the Cha Cha Cha riots in 1961.

### *The Cha Cha Cha riots of 1961: the turning point for UNIP?*

Occurring soon after the Mulungushi Conference, at which over 4,000 UNIP delegates called for 'Action Now' against the Northern Rhodesian and Federation governments, the Cha Cha Cha riots represented something of a turning point for UNIP. The catalyst to the unrest was undoubtedly the failure to achieve African constitutional advance during discussions over a new constitution for Northern

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<sup>63</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/48, F.S. Mubanga, L.S. Chivuno, and A.B. Chisanga, 'Catalogue of Nkumbula's political masturbation', 16 Jan., 1962.

<sup>64</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.77.

<sup>65</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 16/1/16, Kaunda speech at Magoye Conference, Aug., 1962.

Rhodesia. Initially, Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod had proposed that Africans would be given a majority of 16 seats in a Legislative Council of 30, a move that would at the very least be seen as progressive by UNIP's leaders. Federal Prime Minister Welensky rejected Macleod's suggestions outright, forcefully arguing that an African majority would soon lead to the dismantlement of Federation. Macleod responded in February, proposing that there might be 45 members of the legislative assembly, 15 elected by the upper roll, 15 by the lower roll and 15 by both rolls combined. In his own opinion, although unlikely to win universal approval among Africans, the so-called Macleod constitution was designed to establish racial parity in the legislature, at the same time forestalling a possible European coup while negotiating towards a majoritarian outcome.<sup>66</sup> In June, Welensky consented to the changes. For many Africans, the June changes worked to the advantage of the UFP in every respect. The introduction of the Special National constituency for Asian and Coloured voters, most of who would qualify under the higher franchise, severely diminished the prospects of nationalist parties securing upper roll support in the National constituencies. To UNIP's leaders it appeared as though the British had again caved in under pressure from the Federal government.<sup>67</sup>

Reports of UNIP-inspired unrest and increased political activity became widespread after agreement over the proposed constitution was reached. In Lusaka, sporadic cases of arson, violence and intimidation accompanied beerhall boycotts and, before long, the situation deteriorated rapidly.<sup>68</sup> By the third week in August, the first two parts of the Preservation of Public Security Regulations were

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<sup>66</sup> RH, MSS.Afr.s.2179, W. P. Kirkman interview (transcript) with Iain Macleod, 29 Dec 1967.

<sup>67</sup> NA, CAB 128/35/1, CC 33(61), Constitutional Proposals for Northern Rhodesia, 19 Jun., 1961.

<sup>68</sup> RH, WP 245/3, K.J. Archer to N.F. Townley, Minister of Commerce and Industry, 22 Jul., 1961

enacted in Luapula and Northern Provinces. UNIP and Youth Brigade branches in both areas, and on the Copperbelt, where the Preservation of Public Security Regulations had been in force since May, were declared unlawful and meetings were banned. Government reports on 1 September put the number of incidents resulting in the outbreak of violence since 24 July at 901, resulting in 1,400 arrests.<sup>69</sup> Thirty-eight schools had been burned, 34 in Northern Province alone; more than 60 roads had been blocked, 24 bridges destroyed or seriously damaged and 27 deaths had occurred, 20 of which at the hands of security forces.<sup>70</sup> Among the 2,715 persons arrested before the disturbances ended in October, 1,753 were known UNIP supporters, 871 of whom were convicted.<sup>71</sup>

Unrest stopped almost as suddenly as it began. In mid-September, following talks in London between Kaunda and Macleod, the Colonial Office announced its willingness to consider further representations on the proposed constitution, provided the disturbances ended immediately. Kaunda returned to Northern Rhodesia and appealed for an end to the violence.<sup>72</sup> With a marked decline in incidents, the ban against UNIP in the Copperbelt Luapula and Northern Provinces was lifted on 1 November, and the Governor resumed his constitutional discussions with the territory's various political groups the following week.<sup>73</sup> Coming as it did at the height of the disturbances, and much to Welensky's chagrin, Macleod's decision could be regarded as nothing less than a clear UNIP victory.

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<sup>69</sup> NA, CO 1015/2245, Hone to Macleod, 'Incidents of Political Crime for Period 14 Jul., to 1 Sept., 1961

<sup>70</sup> *Northern News*, 14 Sept., 1961.

<sup>71</sup> NA, CO 1015/2246, Despatch, Hone to Macleod, 5 Oct., 1961.

<sup>72</sup> *Northern News*, 14 Sept., 1961.

<sup>73</sup> NA, CO 1015/2246, Despatch, Hone to Macleod, 5 Oct., 1961.

The extent to which the riots of 1961 represented part of a deliberate strategy on behalf of UNIP's leaders to force the Northern Rhodesian and British governments into negotiations over African prospects in the new Northern Rhodesian constitution is an interesting issue. For many historians, such as Thomas Rasmussen, the unrest simply represented the boiling over of tensions in the localities, which soon spread owing to the initiative of several more militant local UNIP leaders.<sup>74</sup> Such an assessment was almost certainly based upon the official inquiry into the disturbances, which concluded:

Whatever the instructions of the leaders of the party may have been, it is clear that the call for positive action was interpreted by the lower formations of the party as the signal for the adoption of violent methods.<sup>75</sup>

What such accounts fail to acknowledge, however, is the direct stimulus given to unrest by UNIP leaders. In July, for instance, Kaunda told his supporters that they had been 'sold down the river of white supremacy', and that he would 'strike at the very roots' of the Federation until it was completely destroyed.<sup>76</sup> In mid-August, he publicly burned his identity certificate as a form of protest at the deaths and violence which had occurred in the north. Whilst it is unlikely that Kaunda anticipated the extent of unrest that would take hold in UNIP-dominated provinces in mid-1961, there was every indication that it was a situation he had intended to cultivate in order to make UNIP's presence on the national stage felt. UNIP claims for greater African advancement would not be compromised or diluted. As Northern Rhodesia's Governor, Evelyn Hone, later wrote to Macleod, UNIP's

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<sup>74</sup> Rasmussen, T., 'The Popular Basis of Anti-Colonial Protest', in Tordoff, W., (ed.), *Politics in Zambia* (Manchester, 1974, p.46.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>76</sup> *Northern News*, 10 Jul., 1961.

President was supposedly well aware of the reaction his actions were likely to provoke:

From his public pronouncements and from his actions, it is clear that Kaunda must have been aware that the lower formations of his party were likely to espouse violence on their own initiative, no matter what directions he or the other leaders of the party might or might not issue.<sup>77</sup>

For Kaunda, personally, the adoption of such tactics would be dangerous. Not only did he risk the breakdown of order and potential permanent banning of his organisation, but he also jeopardised his reputation as a moderate in the opinion of the British authorities. The benefits to accrue from a period of unrest were, nonetheless, tangible and widely-acknowledged. Disappointment and dissatisfaction within UNIP ranks was continuing to build, coming to focus upon Kaunda's alleged moderate approach. Whilst a spate of unrest might serve to vent these frustrations, allowing Kaunda to deflect criticism of his leadership, there was a possibility that they might also force the government to granting constitutional concessions to Africans in much the same way as the British had done in Nyasaland in 1959. As William Chulu remarked in interview, UNIP meetings at this time repeatedly cited Nyasaland's experiences with great 'excitement', and emphasised the need for 'sacrifice' in the forthcoming struggle.<sup>78</sup>

It is unlikely that the plan for Cha Cha Cha had been clearly mapped out before Mulungushi. Evidence would seem to indicate, however, that UNIP leaders were aware of the potential benefits that a display of UNIP's influence and supremacy might bring. That 'positive action' was carried out by the lower formations therefore ought not to suggest that there was a seeming 'lack of

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<sup>77</sup> NA, CO 1015/2245, Hone to Macleod, 'Review of Disturbances', 20 Sept., 1961.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with William Chulu, a former UNIP organiser in Kawambwa District, Luapula Province, Lusaka, 25 Sept., 2011.

control' from the top. The situation might have escalated beyond initial expectations, but UNIP leaders almost certainly played a significant role in creating conditions ripe for UNIP supporters to engage in forms of political agitation. By November 1961, UNIP's actions had paid off. For the first time in the history of the Federation, British officials recognised that by continuing to isolate Kaunda and his supporters, they risked precipitating the breakdown of order. As Macleod remarked to Hone,

I find it very significant that Kaunda has not allowed himself to be forced by his unruly followers to call for campaign of positive action ... I am very much afraid that if we leave him completely incommunicado now we shall inevitably force him either to join with the UNIP hotheads at the lower levels in violent campaign against the Government, or to withdraw from the Territory in which case his political influence is likely to be lost.<sup>79</sup>

Contrary to the hopes of UNIP leaders that a moderate, non-violent, course of policy would pave the way to African advance, there was perhaps a sense of irony that the disturbances of mid-1961 acted as the catalyst for constitutional change. Work was still to be done by Kaunda and his colleagues, but from this moment it was no longer a case of if, but when, Africans in Northern Rhodesia would obtain self-government. After a series of protracted negotiations, the new Colonial Secretary, Reginald Maudling, who had replaced Macleod in October, announced in March 1962 that the new constitution for Northern Rhodesia would come into force after territorial elections scheduled for October of that year.<sup>80</sup> On 5 March, after much deliberation, the decision was taken by UNIP leaders to participate in the elections. The immediate task facing UNIP was thus to prepare

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<sup>79</sup> NA, DO 154/39, Telegram, Macleod to Hone, 1 Aug., 1960.

<sup>80</sup> The only major change from Macleod's June 15-15-15 proposals was in the prescribed minimum percentage arrangements for the election of National members, which was amended from 12½ to 10 per cent of the votes cast by each race.



the party for the elections, to register African voters, and to lay the foundations for future self-government, a process which necessitated yet further reorganisation and centralisation of the party.<sup>81</sup>

*'UNIP was everywhere'<sup>82</sup>: UNIP Organisation, Social Mobilisation and the 1962 Election Campaign, 1962*

Although the 1961 disturbances had shown that violence could be 'encouraged' by UNIP leaders, it had not necessarily been controlled.<sup>83</sup> This was, in large part, a corollary of UNIP's rapid growth during 1960, which had outstripped the capacity of its leadership to maintain effective internal communication and coordination of party policy. Though the practice of appointing executive members for all branch committees ensured loyalty to the centre, UNIP's lower echelons continued to enjoy great freedom from central control.<sup>84</sup> Responding to these concerns, party leaders set-up a subcommittee to investigate ways in which party organisation might be improved and extended so as to ensure more stringent control from the centre.

Reporting in March 1962, the subcommittee stipulated that in spite of UNIP's efforts, the existing organisational structure, comprising divisions, constituencies and branches was not only 'cumbersome', but failed to bring both top-level and subsidiary leadership into close enough contact with the 'common

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<sup>81</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.232. The task was daunting, not least because 100,000 new African voters had to be registered and taught the complicating voting procedures called for under the new Constitution.

<sup>82</sup> Comment made in interview with Faith Pemba, Lusaka, 25 Sept., 2011.

<sup>83</sup> See BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/1/1/12, Marcel Daubechies, Bishop of Kasama, White Fathers Mission, to Divisional President, Mpika, 10 Jan., 1962. As Daubechies wrote, UNIP had lost control in the area which had created 'widespread anarchy'. The solution, Daubechies stated, was for UNIP leaders to visit the province and 're-impose' order on the party's 'unruly masses'.

<sup>84</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.163.

man'.<sup>85</sup> Galvanised by the report, UNIP leaders attempted to remedy the concerns raised, embarking on a comprehensive reorganisation of party machinery. To tie UNIP's lower formations more closely to national headquarters, the party's eight provincial divisions were abolished and subdivided into 24 'regions' covering the entire territory.<sup>86</sup> Full-time organising secretaries, who bore sole responsibility for party activities and for constituency and branch-level groups in their respective areas, were appointed by and made responsible to UNIP's Central Committee. In addition, youth and women's brigades were brought into the main party body. While both youth and women's brigades were the responsibility of their respective directors at UNIP headquarters, and though each had its separate organisation running parallel to that of the main party, brigade officials were brought under the supervision of party officials at regional, constituency, and branch level in order to ensure compliance with central directives.<sup>87</sup> UNIP's new constitution was specific on the point that 'the brigades shall not take any separate action on political matters', and the regional youth organiser, now a major figure in the youth brigade's hierarchy, was required to perform his functions 'in consultation' with the regional organising secretary.<sup>88</sup> A new director of youth, Hayden Banda, was appointed to facilitate the changes. As *figure 5.5* indicates, UNIP leaders were attempting to create a highly sophisticated organisational structure, especially when compared to that of the ANC.

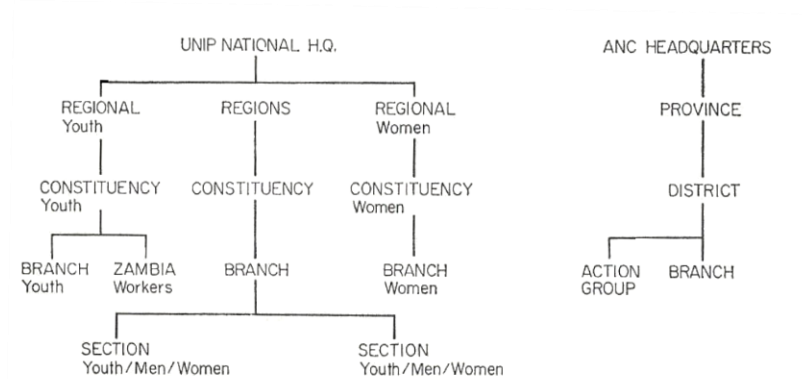
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<sup>85</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 8/1/1, Party Re-Organisation Proposals, Submitted to UNIP National Council, 5 Mar., 1962. The three-man subcommittee consisted of Lewis Changufu, UNIP's Transport Secretary, Dingiswayo Banda, UNIP's Director of Youth, and Sikota Wina.

<sup>86</sup> Western and Luapula Province were divided into four and two regions respectively, while all other provinces, including Barotseland, were each divided into three regions.

<sup>87</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.68.

<sup>88</sup> BL ANC 121, UNIP 5/1/1/2/1, C.P. Bwalya, Regional Secretary, Kasama, to all Constituency Secretaries, 20 May, 1962.



**Fig. 5.5,** taken from Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p. 53

In conjunction with party reorganisation, UNIP's National Council was made more representative. Whereas the Council had previously numbered roughly 50 members, it was now expanded to include 72 elected delegates, 24 regional secretaries and the party's leaders at national headquarters. Each region's delegation comprised, in addition to the regional secretary, an elected delegate from the main body of the party and one from each of the two brigades.<sup>89</sup> As Mulford suggests, however, these structural changes were probably less important than the attention given to training the men who would take over the newly created regional posts. Between late 1961 and April 1962, UNIP's former division secretaries attended training courses in Ghana organised by Sipalo, by then serving as UNIP's representative in Accra. Furthermore, Banda, who had been building the youth movement into a formidable cadre during 1962, initiated courses in both Ghana and East Africa for leading youth brigade officials who would eventually become second in command of the new regional organisations.<sup>90</sup>

Structural changes were accompanied by a distinct shift in emphasis in the party's recruitment methods. Sections at the local level were urged to become

<sup>89</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.234.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

more 'community focussed', abandoning 'protection' measures intended to 'seek out those who wished to harm UNIP' to instead assume the role of 'friendly societies'.<sup>91</sup> If a section attendee was imprisoned for a political offence, for instance, section leaders organised the payment of house rent and saw that a regular supply of mealie meal went to the wife of the imprisoned man. Collections of mealie meal also went from the section to the branch, where unemployed youth, whose parents were also out of work, could come to collect free food. A change in the focus of local organisation was almost certainly part of UNIP's wider remit to place the party at the very centre of African lives. As Faith Pemba, a retired civil servant and former UNIP member who joined the party in Lusaka in 1961 recalled;

We wanted to show that UNIP meant business. Not in a forceful way. That would only cause the government and the informers to tell the people that UNIP was a bad thing. The aim was to persuade people about UNIP from now on. We had to do this because soon UNIP would be the government and our leaders did not want opposition to the UNIP government. We had to make UNIP part of everyday lives. When people rose in the morning, UNIP had to be there. When they went to work, UNIP had to represent [them]. When they ate, UNIP had to supply the food. There was much to do at this time.<sup>92</sup>

Implementation of UNIP's reorganisation strategy varied according to the circumstances in regions in which UNIP officials operated. The reasons for such discrepancies are unclear, though they appear to be intimately related to the nature of competition UNIP faced from other political parties. There was far greater incentive for UNIP leaders to mobilise in regions where the party found itself vying for supremacy with the ANC. In Mufulira, Copperbelt Province, for example, UNIP organisers admitted that the area was an 'ANC stronghold'.<sup>93</sup> As such, party activists

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<sup>91</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.63.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Faith Pemba, Lusaka, 25 Sept., 2011.

<sup>93</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/1/2, Report to the National Council of UNIP, Mufulira Branch, 7 Dec., 1963.

in the region were instructed to 'step up' their organisational drive and warned that local branch leaders would be suspended if they were seen to 'sit idle' in the struggle against the 'power-hungary' [sic.] opponents of UNIP.<sup>94</sup> Organisers in the region did not want for resources to perform their task. UNIP's Copperbelt branches were generally well funded and UNIP officials regularly paid. The situation in large parts of the Western Province, notably Barotseland, in contrast, differed markedly. Branch leaders frequently complained of a lack of resources and the hardships they were forced to endure as a result of recurrent non-payment of allowances.<sup>95</sup> This was not, Mainza Chona argued, a result of a lack of support given by UNIP headquarters. Rather it owed much to the reluctance of colonial administrators to 'make life easy' for UNIP activists who had, until early 1962, been restricted from registering branches in the area by the Barotse Native Government.<sup>96</sup> In January 1963, D.M. Chikulo, Regional Secretary in Mankoya-Lukulu, wrote to Kaunda lamenting the conditions where even 'animals would find it difficult to survive'.

It seems that the local white civil servants here have been given full discretionary powers to suppress the people in order to show them that our African majority government does not mean any change in administration ... We are not allowed to rent even rest houses. Worse still we are not even permitted to lease our own land on which to build our offices or to hold public or indoor meetings. Our movements are being regulated just as in the Zambia days, and indirect persecution of our supporters is still rife ... We cannot stand it any longer, and our endurance has now reached a limit

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, UNIP Circular, W.C. Skialuzwe, Constituency Secretary, Mufulira, 2 Jun., 1964.

<sup>95</sup> See for instance BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/6/1/10, Priscilla Kutoma, Divisional Woman Organiser, Mongu, to National Treasurer, 24 Jul., 1962. See also, UNIP 5/6/1/9, Munalula Mukelabai, the Regional Youth Secretary in Mankoya-Lukulu, wrote to the National Treasurer on 6 December 1961 complaining of the 'horror of starvation' that he had had to endure since being posted in Barotseland.

<sup>96</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/6/1/6, Mainza Chona to S.N. Lisselo, Organising Secretary, Mongu-Lealui, Barotseland, 14 Feb., 1962.

where even the patience of Christ cannot stand such monstrous imperialist machinations.<sup>97</sup>

Requests for funds and complaints over working conditions were in part a reflection of the difficult circumstances in which many UNIP organisers were working, but they perhaps point to something altogether more profound. Isolated, poor and sometimes homeless, these men and women were clearly prepared to sacrifice themselves, and in some cases their dignity, for the UNIP cause. In April 1963, Renford Lubasi wrote to the National Treasurer from Sesheke, Barotseland Province, requesting the sum of £7 to buy his wife a new dress or two. 'My wife and I are almost naked', he wrote, 'and are a shamful [sic.] sight to look at. Some of us have always shown enthusiasm and determination to see our work through but as a married man with a wife moving half naked it is really a great trial. Something that no one can stomach'.<sup>98</sup>

Whilst one must take into consideration the natural propensity to exaggerate hardship when appealing for additional funds, it is evident that many organisers endured difficult times for the sake of the party. As Foster Mubanga, a UNIP organiser in Mikomfwa, vividly described, working to mobilise the people required immense physical exertion, often for little financial reward. Walking with her three children from village to village, Mubanga revealed that she often went hungry and had to beg for water. 'We were suffering', she wrote, 'walking on foot, hungry in the hot sun; and if it was raining, it was all the worse'.<sup>99</sup> Stories of this

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<sup>97</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/6/1/11 D.M. Chikulo, Regional Secretary, Mankoya-Lukulu, to National President, 25 Jan., 1963. Soon after receiving these complaints, UNIP leaders urged organisers in Barotseland to be patient. Soon, wrote N.V. Zaza, UNIP would 'capture' the Barotseland. UNIP 5/6/1/5, N.V. Zaza, National Secretary, to Richard Susiku, 4 Jun., 1962.

<sup>98</sup> UNIP 5/6/1/12, Renford Lubasi, Regional Youth Secretary, Sesheke, to National Treasurer, 8 Apr., 1963.

<sup>99</sup> 'Freedom and Labour': the text of Foster Mubanga in Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.33.

nature would suggest that for many, UNIP was not just a party; its propaganda not merely empty rhetoric. UNIP offered hope of a better future, one in which Africans could prosper as citizens with equal rights and equal responsibilities.

For some, party membership was not solely a way of working towards a more prosperous future. Joining UNIP also offered increased social mobility in a society in which opportunities had been restricted. On the Copperbelt, where employment turnover was high, UNIP membership offered an opportunity for stability. It was perhaps for this reason that individuals petitioned the party in their hundreds, seeking appointment as UNIP organisers or administrators. Letters such as those from Tapson Mtonga, who wrote to UNIP headquarters requesting a job in 'active politics' following the termination of his employment at Mufulira Copper Mines, were a common feature of correspondence with UNIP headquarters in the early 1960s.<sup>100</sup> As Michael Monk, a former colonial administrator and UNIP sympathiser in Lusaka during the 1960s remarked,

What the nationalists offered was a tangible future; a means by which people could better themselves. Under UNIP people felt that they wouldn't be mistreated or exploited as they were under the white man. They would have better pay and better prospects ... By offering themselves as the party of 'Zambia', UNIP presented itself as the party of opportunity.<sup>101</sup>

There were of course differing motives for joining UNIP for every individual, but on the basis of evidence collated during research for this thesis, it is clear that UNIP meant much more than the offering of opportunities to the disenfranchised. Those working for UNIP genuinely believed their actions had truly 'national' relevance. Ingrained into African culture, song and dance, to work for UNIP was comparable to working for God in the struggle against Satan, personified in UNIP

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<sup>100</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/1/1, Tapson Mtonga to Dingiswayo Banda, 24 May, 1962.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Michael Monk, Lusaka, 15 Sept., 2011.

propaganda as colonialism.<sup>102</sup> 'Imperialism is the source of all evil', declared an article entitled 'Evil Imperialism Faces its Fate' in the 1962 *Voice of UNIP*, the party's official newspaper.<sup>103</sup> Holding UNIP meetings in one's home, or pasting UNIP posters to walls was not just the simple act of propagating the party, but, according to William Chulu, a former UNIP organiser in Mansa, Luapula Province, akin to 'doing one's duty for Zambia'.<sup>104</sup>

### ***Mobilisation through intimidation: the origins of inter-party violence***

As UNIP began to consolidate its hold over the African people in Northern Rhodesia's urban provinces, the propensity of its members to resort to intimidation of those openly rejecting UNIP's vision of Zambia's future became an ever more prominent feature of nationalist politics. Over time, such violence became something more symbolic than the expression of anti-ANC rhetoric, becoming as much a feature of UNIP's national agenda as more traditional appeals to new nationhood. Deployed as a political weapon with 'considerable success', intimidation was not only a means to enforce adherence to UNIP's national agenda but a way of fostering a 'commonality of interest' amongst UNIP members, unifying disparate ethnic groups in opposition to those standing outside the UNIP body politic.<sup>105</sup> To engage in such activities was to partake in the building of the new

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<sup>102</sup> As Mubanga wrote, 'To suffer for your brethren is a good thing, because you can be received by Jesus; working for your brother, is working for God'. 'Freedom and Labour': the text of Foster Mubanga in Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, p.31.

<sup>103</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 14/12/1, *Voice of UNIP*, May, 1962.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with William Chulu, Lusaka, 20 Sept., 2011.

<sup>105</sup> NA, DO 183/144 Secret Special Branch Report, 'Intimidation in NR', 11 May, 1962.



nation. Violence brought people together, united in one aim, creating among perpetrators a 'brotherhood of UNIP'.<sup>106</sup>

The most intense period of UNIP-inspired violence coincided with the ANC's revival between late 1961 and 1962. Before his untimely death on 9 November 1961, Lawrence Katilungu had done much to revitalise a declining party. Not only was the party making gains in UNIP strongholds, a corollary of Katilungu's efforts to step-up organisation efforts on the Copperbelt, Northern, and Luapula Provinces, but the party was also beginning to gain a following among Europeans on the basis of its reputation as a moderate alternative to the more extremist UNIP.<sup>107</sup> The ANC had, after all, accepted the constitutional proposals of June 1961, disassociated itself from the militant forces of Pan-Africanism, and, above all, had repudiated UNIP's role in the 1961 disturbances.<sup>108</sup> Katilungu's actions during his brief tenure as the ANC president provided Nkumbula with an opportunity to seize lost initiative upon his release from gaol in January 1962. One of his first moves was to reposition the ANC squarely to the right of UNIP, which stood only for 'totalitarian government'. The ANC offered an alternative path, one committed to 'private enterprise' and the complete freedom of the individual.<sup>109</sup>

UNIP's response to the ANC's renewed drive for members was to re-emphasise that those rejecting the UNIP path posed a concrete political menace to the party and nation. According to intelligence sources, UNIP spokesmen

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Chibesa Kampo, former African miner and UNIP members, Lusaka, 22 Sept., 2011.

<sup>107</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/45, ANC Conference Report, Oct., 1961. Attendance at the ANC in late September, for instance, was hugely impressive and sufficient to rival UNIP's Conference at Mulungushi.

<sup>108</sup> See for instance, BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/93, S. Ndilila to 'All members of all races', undated, 1961. Ndilila was one of the first ANC members to publicly use the disturbance to attack UNIP. How could a party, he asked, supposedly committed to nonviolence yet at the same time engage in violent disturbances be trusted as a party representative of Africans?

<sup>109</sup> *Central African Mail*, 24 Jul., 1962.

repeatedly declared that the suppression of opposition was 'essential to their success in the forthcoming Territorial elections' and that people were constantly reminded of the need to 'eliminate Congress by any means, including violence'.<sup>110</sup> Tantamount to condoning attacks on fellow African non-UNIP members, UNIP's lower cadres became embroiled from early 1962 in a struggle to remove the ANC's influence in UNIP strongholds. At the end of the year, the situation reached breaking point.

In large part responsible for the intensification of inter-party rivalry was Kaunda's decision to enter into a coalition with the ANC following UNIP's disappointing performance in the Northern Rhodesian elections held in October. Having mounted a comprehensive campaign, which placed heavy emphasis on educating potential African voters in election procedures and creating for the party a new image in order to win European support, UNIP's hopes for a majority were disappointed. Overall, UNIP won 14 seats on the Legislative Council, achieving 14.8 per cent of votes on the upper roll and 78.2 per cent on the lower roll. Roy Welensky's United Federal Party [UFP] achieved 15 seats, winning 70.5 per cent of the vote on the upper roll and 0.2 per cent on the lower roll, and the ANC 3.4 per cent and 21.3 per cent respectively, which gave the party five seats.<sup>111</sup> No party had won a clear majority, and thereafter the two most popular parties, UNIP and the UFP, began a desperate campaign to convince Nkumbula to join a coalition

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<sup>110</sup> NA, DO 183/138, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Apr., 1962.

<sup>111</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 52, COU 96(a), UNIP Report on General Election Outcome by the Director of Elections, 11 Nov., 1962. In terms of exact numbers, on the upper roll, UFP polled 21,558 votes, UNIP 4,519, and the ANC, 1,025. On the lower roll, UNIP gained 59,648, and, 16,268, and the UFP, 180.

government.<sup>112</sup> The ANC's continued existence on the political scene had placed the party in a position of influence entirely disproportionate to its numerical strength.<sup>113</sup>

Courting Nkumbula was initially regarded by Kaunda and his leadership colleagues as eminently undesirable. This was not least because it was felt that the ANC's position of artificial strength had been garnered by virtue of a limited election alliance with the UFP, whereby in several National constituencies each party nominated only one candidate and instructed their respective supporters to cast the second of their two National votes for the allied party's candidate. But although an unwanted complication, Kaunda appreciated that the only means to ensure an African government was for UNIP to ally with his 'mis-directed friend'.<sup>114</sup> After a series of protracted discussions involving several compromises, Kaunda and Nkumbula issued a joint statement on 16 November confirming their intention to set aside their differences. On 12 December 1962, the coalition was formalised and the ANC received three of the six ministerial positions in the formation of the first African-dominated government in Northern Rhodesia. Although a success for UNIP and its supporters, the coalition firmly consolidated ANC's position as UNIP's direct rival.

Soon after the election, intelligence officials reported a 'serious deterioration' in the security situation in the Western and Eastern Provinces, where UNIP agitators had switched the focus of their attacks from the government to the

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<sup>112</sup> *Northern News*, 3 Nov., 1963.

<sup>113</sup> For a more in-depth discussion on the election and the respective campaigns of UNIP, the ANC and the UFP, see Mulford, *Zambia*, pp.231-284

<sup>114</sup> Kaunda's quote from Mulford, *Zambia*, p.292.

ANC.<sup>115</sup> Between December 1962 and May 1963, 428 instances of violent crime were reported, almost half of which were said to have been the product of UNIP-inspired intimidation.<sup>116</sup> Many of the party's provincial leaders, determined to 'eliminate Congress influence' in their regions, did little to discourage UNIP members from engaging in conflict with those suspected, or known, to belong to the ANC.<sup>117</sup> Party circulars continued to warn ANC members that UNIP's victory was a 'certainty', and that 'stern measures' would be taken against those 'ill disposed towards our government'.<sup>118</sup> Stoking the embers of tension, rumours abounded of ANC attacks against UNIP members. In the south, recounted Solomon Mwamba, women and children were allegedly being systematically assaulted by the 'evil ANC', and if Nkumbula ever came to power, ANC would 'come and kill us [UNIP] in our beds'.<sup>119</sup> As minutes taken at a meeting of UNIP held by provincial officials in Mufimbilwa village demonstrate, local UNIP leaders responded by telling officials to organise the youth to 'attack and fight with ANC'. Papers were to be pressed in every door of UNIP members saying, '*Mwabombeni Mwabombeni*' [you are working] in order to know 'who is our member and who is to be attacked'.<sup>120</sup>

By neglecting to provide a necessary corrective to inflammatory rumours and statements uttered by the party's local officials, and by neglecting to withdraw the membership of those convicted of violent crimes, UNIP leaders gave at the very

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<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Mar., 1962.

<sup>116</sup> RH, WP 245/6, Stewart Parker to Welensky, 27 May, 1963.

<sup>117</sup> RH, WP 245/3, Secret Report for Federal Government, 'Violence between UNIP and ANC', 10 May, 1962

<sup>118</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/1/2, W. Silavwe, Regional Publicity Secretary, UNIP Circular in Mufulira, 'Mufulira Congressites Watch Out: Betrayal by Your Leaders', undated, (but 1963).

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Solomon Mwamba, 20 Sept., 2011

<sup>120</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 4/3, Meeting of UNIP held at Mufimbilwa Village, between UNIP Provincial Officials, B. Mpambalwani, E. Ngandu, A. Ngalashi, M. Chisipa and the Youth Branch Secretaries of Miyongole and Milungu, 28 Apr., 1963.

least tacit approval to the actions of those individuals at the fore of the anti-ANC campaign. For many within the party, these men had sacrificed their personal liberty for the national cause and should therefore not be punished for doing so.<sup>121</sup> The condemnation of the Northern Rhodesian police, freely accused by UNIP of bias towards the ANC, did little to alleviate tension.<sup>122</sup> At a public meeting in Ndola on 24 November 1963, Sipalo even went so far as to threaten those police responsible for the suppression and killing of UNIP members, stating that they would be tried for their crimes once UNIP had won the general election.<sup>123</sup>

UNIP's 'frivolous and unprovoked' attacks on Congress' 'peace-loving' citizens did not take place without retaliation.<sup>124</sup> In the early 1960s, Nkumbula did not shy away from occasionally condoning, or indeed encouraging, retaliatory violence. 'You have been too submissive and patient for too long', he told party delegates in 1962, from now on, 'if you are attacked, you attack them too. Our policy is that if one Congress member is attacked in one District that means the Province and the whole of Northern Rhodesia has been attacked'.<sup>125</sup> Nkumbula's refusal to condemn all forms of political violence did much to stimulate a belief among provincial officials in Central and Southern Provinces that preventative violence, which took the form of a myriad of acts of daily intimidation, was the best possible means to defend the ANC's position. Inter-party violence reached a crescendo on the

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<sup>121</sup> See, for instance, BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/1/2, S.C. Mukando, UNIP Circular to all Regional Publicity Secretaries, 5 Jun., 1964.

<sup>122</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/1/3, 'J.M. to UNIP Secretary, 8 Feb., 1963. In February, for example, 'J.M.' called for UNIP leaders to 'take action' against the police, who were deliberately encouraging ANC members to attack UNIP. In one instance, 'J.M.' recalls that police were called to deal with an incident in which two ANC members were beating a UNIP member. Rather than arrest the ANC members, however, the police took away the 'beaten' UNIP member and placed him in a police cell.

<sup>123</sup> NA, DO 183/138, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Dec., 1963.

<sup>124</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 2/3, T.S. Kamphinga, Chingola, to ANC Headquarters, 12 Jul., 1962.

<sup>125</sup> Proceedings of ANC National Assembly meeting detailed in *Central African Mail*, 30 Oct., 1962.

Copperbelt in June 1963, when ten Africans lost their lives after serious rioting.<sup>126</sup> In the resulting commission of inquiry, it was concluded that ANC and UNIP leaders had each done much to cultivate a climate in which 'suspicion thrived' and 'violence was condoned'.<sup>127</sup>

According to A.S. Sichilaba, ANC Provincial Secretary in the Central Province, UNIP's anti-ANC campaign had been hugely successful in diminishing support for the ANC in certain regions.

UNIP methods of intimidation have been effectively used so much so that our members feel they are in danger. Nearly half of our members have failed to renew their membership. They are Congress in heart. They fear to come in open as ANC members. This leads to the thinking that ANC is dead. Heavy complaints have been put on the Provincial Staff and the Head Office that they have been neglected. This to a certain extent is a fair complaint. Here we should appreciate the courage of the members and their local Officials. They have taken a strong stand to withstand intimidation.<sup>128</sup>

Contrary to such views, evidence would seem to suggest that UNIP did not succeed in diminishing ANC influence entirely. The party continued to hold substantial support in its traditional Southern and Central province strongholds and, where the party did lose support, this was seen to be a result of Nkumbula's decision to join the coalition government with its closest rival than a consequence of UNIP intimidation. In the first instance, the formation of the coalition exposed the ANC to the threat of retaliation from the party's former sponsors. Welensky was left 'bitterly disappointed' by Nkumbula's decision, and sought thereafter to work actively to undermine the party by lending support to the People's Democratic

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<sup>126</sup> NA, DO 183/138, Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, Jun., 1963.

<sup>127</sup> See for instance, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Unrest on the Copperbelt, July-August, 1963*, Whelan Commission.

<sup>128</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/48, A.S. Shicilaba, Provincial General Secretary, Central Province, 'Monthly Report', 1 Jul., 1963. This is supported by a Special Branch report in NA, DO 183/34, Secret Intelligence Report, 22 Aug., 1962, in which it is claimed that UNIP success in ANC's Southern Province stronghold was testified by the absence of any major upheavals at UNIP's Annual General Meeting held in Magoye, Southern Province.

Congress, led by former ANC National Secretary, Job Michello.<sup>129</sup> Even more damaging to the ANC's future prospects was decline in the friendly relations with Moise Tshombe. After the end of the secession of Katanga in 1963, the deposed Tshombe became deeply wary of Nkumbula and, unsurprisingly, the amount of financial aid that had been so pivotal to the ANC's survival, subsequently decreased. With the ending of such support, the ANC faced almost certain bankruptcy by mid-1963.<sup>130</sup> Creditors were foreclosing on debts and assets had been seized. By March, Nkumbula pleaded in an ANC circular for donations amounting to over £150,000 for the maintenance of the party alone.<sup>131</sup>

UNIP's anti-ANC campaign, then, was not entirely responsible for diminishing the ANC's influence in Northern Rhodesian politics. What it did do, nonetheless, was to consolidate existing authoritarian tendencies existent in the UNIP body-politic, strengthening the belief among UNIP national and local leaders alike that the future belonged exclusively to them. Another somewhat less obvious corollary of the anti-ANC campaign was that it helped consolidate UNIP's attempts at cultivating popular adherence to a 'national' agenda. In creating a common enemy, in the form of the ANC, UNIP leaders positioned the party as a 'victim', coming under attack from the ANC, the Federal authorities and the colonialists. As Sipalo wrote in a circular to UNIP Divisional secretaries in April 1961, UNIP members had to respond by 'coming together' to repel 'forces that would do us harm', denouncing, ostracising and 'removing' opponents of the nation.<sup>132</sup> By

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<sup>129</sup> Welensky, *4000 Days*, p.231

<sup>130</sup> NA, DO 183/138, Northern Rhodesia Intelligence Report, Aug., 1963.

<sup>131</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 7/48, Nkumbula open letter to ANC members, Mar., 1963.

<sup>132</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/6/1, M.S. Bwembya, Acting Youth Regional Secretary, to All Constituency and Branch Youth Organisers, Chingola/Bancroft/Konkola Region, 6 Jan., 1964. As this demonstrates,

endorsing the suppression of anti-UNIP forces, party leaders thus created a 'community of violence', one in which all UNIP adherents would be expected to participate. This was in many respects the construction of a 'mass national commodity spectacle', a display of party unity and strength, underlining the indefatigability of UNIP, in which all members could participate irrespective of tribal or ethnic differences. Once it became clear in 1963 that UNIP would in fact inherit the nation as its own, it was a spectacle that was soon to become the driving force behind UNIP's nationalism.

As Carloyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel suggest, inter-party violence provided a rallying point at a critical time in which division threatened to split the party once the main focus of UNIP political agitation, the Federation, had been removed.<sup>133</sup> As Miles Larmer proposes in a recent study, UNIP was itself an 'uneasy coalition' of disparate discontents and aspirations, united by the desire to achieve new nationhood.<sup>134</sup> In much a similar manner to the MCP, the removal of Federation and the granting of the right of secession caused confusion within UNIP ranks. Gone was the focal point for unity. The 1962 election campaign had for a time suppressed internal dissension, but disagreement rose to the fore soon after. This initially came to be expressed in the form of opposition to the decision to join the coalition with the ANC. In large numbers individuals wrote to UNIP's National Secretary lamenting the decision to join with the 'crook' Nkumbula, 'untrustworthy as satan [sic.], who

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a common feature of UNIP propaganda was the notion that the party was coming under constant attack. It was being attacked by the ANC, attacked by the Federal authorities, and attacked by colonialists. As Sipalo wrote in a circular to UNIP Divisional Secretaries in April 1961, UNIP members ought to respond by 'denouncing', 'ostracising' and 'removing' opponents to the true African nation. See also, BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/8/1/1/3, M. Sipalo to All Divisional Secretaries, 19 Apr., 1961.

<sup>133</sup> Baylies, C., Szeftel, M., 'The Fall and Rise of Multi-Party Politics in Zambia', *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 54, 'Surviving Democracy?' (Jul., 1992), pp.75-91.

<sup>134</sup> Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*, p.12.



had 'sold his soul to the Federalists'.<sup>135</sup> This was clearly an issue that presented a series of moral dilemmas for UNIP's members. As Provincial Commissioner R.E. Luyt observed in December, growing discontent soon began to threaten Kaunda's position within the party.

Kaunda is having considerable difficulties in his own party, and these difficulties are showing some signs of being serious enough to constitute a threat to his leadership. Part of the threat comes from tribal divisions among the top UNIP supporters, the 'Lozi group' having little love for the 'Bemba group' ... Kaunda has had to face criticism and attack for allegedly being too conciliatory, particularly towards Europeans, and not generally behaving in as tough a way as some of his Lozi lieutenants would like.<sup>136</sup>

Tribal rivalry owed much to the manner in which political patronage was distributed. A recurrent complaint was that Kaunda and his closest Bemba allies were actively promoting the socio-economic and political advance of Bembas at the behest of other ethnic groups. The issue soon came to occupy the attention of ANC propagandists. 'Kaunda is not a happy man', read an ANC circular,

He rejects allegations of tribalism in his party, forgetting purposely that 75% of the party's funds is spent on education of his Bemba brothers and sisters overseas, paying for their hut rents in Africa and so on ... If some of the people do not believe my criticism, I should ask them to visit UNIP offices and see for themselves how many Bemba are working there, and how many different tribes are there.<sup>137</sup>

With elections scheduled for 20 January 1964, the African coalition having received approval for a new constitution under an expanded African franchise, Kaunda could ill afford such division to foster, particularly when the ANC had seen 'an important opportunity' for targeting disaffected UNIP members.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/2/1/12, Sylvester Mwamba Chisembele, Divisional Secretary, to National Secretary, 15 Jun., 1963.

<sup>136</sup> NA, DO 183/127, Luyt to Alport, 29 Dec., 1962.

<sup>137</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/6/1/11, ANC Circular, 'Away with Kenneth Kaunda and his Destructive [sic.] Bembas', undated, 1963.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

It was arguably for this reason that Kaunda sanctioned tough action against the Lumpa Church in the Northern Province in 1963. Conflict between UNIP and the followers of Alice Lenshina arose out of the perceived threat that the popular church posed to UNIP's supremacy on the Copperbelt and in the Northern Province. Between 1961 and May 1962, the Lumpa Church was active on the Copperbelt. It was arguably UNIP's disappointing performance in 1962 that precipitated the breakdown of relations between the two groups. With UNIP keen to ensure undivided loyalty, the Lumpa Church's presence was increasingly seen to rival the party's authority. This became evident in mid-1963, when Lumpa members stopped buying UNIP party cards and refused a UNIP request to stop meeting on Sundays.<sup>139</sup> In August, Jameson Chapoloko, UNIP's 'strongman' Regional Secretary, attempted to engineer a local UNIP reaction against the Church. Sensing that UNIP headquarters would disapprove of violence against former supporters, Chapoloko wrote to Mainza Chona in Lusaka complaining of continued Lumpa opposition and stressing his desire to reach a 'peaceful' solution with the Church.<sup>140</sup> On the same day, however, Chapoloko informed local UNIP activists that the Lumpa Church was no more than a ploy by the outgoing colonial administration to divide and manipulate Africans, and encouraged them to 'drown Lenshina and her cult'.<sup>141</sup> Action against the Lumpa Church peaked in Chinsali District in December 1963, when several UNIP-Lumpa battles led to the deaths of ten people and the wounding of 100.<sup>142</sup> Kaunda had been aware of the deteriorating situation, having visited

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<sup>139</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/1/2/1/4, Chapoloko to Priestley, 22 Jun., 1963.

<sup>140</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 16/6/145, Chapoloko to Chona, 28 Aug., 1963.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapoloko to UNIP Constituency Secretaries, 29 Aug., 1963.

<sup>142</sup> Gordon, D., 'Rebellion of massacre? The UNIP-Lumpa conflict revisited', in Gewald, Hinfelaar, Macola, *One Zambia, Many Histories*, p.57.

Lenshina in September to negotiate a truce between the two groups. But while he had attempted to promote reconciliation, the fact that Chapoloko was given a free hand in encouraging UNIP militants suggested that Kaunda was prepared to abdicate responsibility for a particular situation where it was deemed politically expedient to do so. As Gordon argues, this reasoning underpinned the decision to demand the disbandment, and later the crushing of the Lumpa Church in July 1964.<sup>143</sup>

The situation came to a head in late July following the UNIP Government's decision to enact the Preservation of Public Security Act, prohibiting Lumpa church meetings. Kaunda travelled to Chinsali and there met with the Provincial Operations Committee. There, it was decided to despatch 2,000 soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Northern Rhodesia Regiment [NRR] to deal with Lumpa members' refusal to leave their village of Sione. On 30 July, armed with spears, bows and arrows, Lumpa members attacked the advancing NRR. Soldiers retaliated using rifles and machine guns, firing upon all those who resisted. According to official reports, over 1,000 Lumpa members were killed between July and August.<sup>144</sup> The actions of the NRR were, of course, not the same as intimidation of opposition by UNIP members, but given that the NRR were despatched by Kaunda's government it nevertheless demonstrates that some UNIP leaders remained anxious to eradicate potentially troublesome groups in the Northern Rhodesian polity.

It was unlikely that Kaunda himself regarded violence as a legitimate mobilisation tactic, but there is little doubt that it served a vital purpose for the party during a critical phase in its history. By providing opportunities for individuals

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<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

to engage in displays of party supremacy, violence perpetrated against the ANC and former UNIP supporters brought together rivalling factions within the party. Whilst this gave the veneer of unity, it also convinced the British that African enfranchisement ought to occur sooner rather than later lest moderates such as Kaunda lose the initiative to more extreme elements.

### *UNIP's Anti-Opposition Campaign and its Impact upon Post-Independence Politics*

The very nature of African nationalism that took root in Northern Rhodesia made it highly susceptible to internal division. As Joanna Lewis suggests, it was an enormous challenge to forge cohesion from parties 'run on a shoe string', in areas lacking a territorial consciousness but 'riven by linguistic and religious differences, tribalism, and regionalism'.<sup>145</sup> Part of the reason why UNIP was successfully able to weld together these disparate groups was in large part a corollary of Northern Rhodesian nationalism's distinctly moral basis, which gave its proponents the power and ability to 'mask internal conflicts'.<sup>146</sup> Once the moral crusade had been won, however, it became increasingly difficult to maintain internal unity. In a similar manner to Hastings Banda's suppression of internal opposition in 1964, UNIP's campaign against the Lumpa Church provided at least some indication that similar policies would be adopted in Zambia after independence. UNIP leaders anticipated that disillusionment might soon proliferate once the party's immediate objectives

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<sup>145</sup> Lewis, J., 'Harold Macmillan and the Wind of Change', in Roger Louis, Wm. (ed.), *Resurgent Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain*, (London, 2011), pp.211-226, p.222.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

had been achieved. In December 1964, Jonathan Ronnie Lupambo, told branch secretaries in Chingola,

Since we attained our self government, every one of us has been thinking of himself as a satisfied man and woman. We came to get our independence in the sovereign state of Zambia as a Republic it then came to be even worse, and the song of the day has been, 'we have got it'. Alright, we have got it. My question is, what have we got? Can not others get it from us? ... We shall never know where our enemies will come from. Therefore arise and start organising our people.<sup>147</sup>

Contrary to the expectations of many UNIP leaders, independence was to bring disillusionment of a different nature. This came to be expressed in widespread dissatisfaction with the UNIP government. No sooner had the flag of Zambia been raised than the newly elected leaders had to contend with the ramifications that their hastily constructed national ideal would bring, now UNIP had been thrust into government. One of the earliest problems UNIP had to deal with was managing the expectations of the people, who had been led to believe that independence would bring opportunity and prosperity. Criticism of the government's failure to address the demands of people in Luapula Province was expressed as early as 1964.<sup>148</sup> On the Copperbelt, mineworkers clashed with UNIP in 1965-66, over demands for the transformational wage increase they saw as their just reward for their role in the nationalist struggle.<sup>149</sup> Similar discontent was indicated in official documents presented to UNIP's national conference in 1967,

You told us to vote for UNIP and UNIP is governing, but what has UNIP, for which you suffered so much, done for you? ... You are living worse now than you were under Colonial rule ... UNIP believes in 'Unto those who

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<sup>147</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/1/8/2, Jonathan Ronnie Lupambo, Constituency Secretary, Chingola, to All Branch Secretaries, Chingola, 31 Dec., 1964.

<sup>148</sup> Macola, G., 'It means as if we are excluded from the Good freedom': Thwarted Expectations of Independence in the Luapula Province of Zambia, 1964 -6', *Journal of African History*, 47 (2006), pp. 43-56.

<sup>149</sup> Larmer, M., 'Unrealistic Expectation? Zambia's Mineworkers from Independence to the One-Party State, 1964-1972', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 18, 4 (2005), pp.318-52.

have, more will be given and Unto those who have not, more will be taken away'.<sup>150</sup>

Disappointment was particularly acute in the Northern Province, where many UNIP activists believed that their prominent role in the liberation struggle was not being adequately compensated in terms of both political appointments, and economic development. Part of the widening discrepancy between the expectations of UNIP leaders and activists owed much to the fact that, during the liberation struggle, the centre had little control over the way that local activists were introduced to the aims and ideology of the party. From the outset, UNIP's programme was presented in terms of local grievances and in terms of the prospects of a better standard of living thereafter. Such promises mobilised young men into action, many of whom risked imprisonment and unemployment for their commitment to the party cause. But the stark realities facing UNIP once independence had been won rendered them obsolete. Now, remarked George Chewe, a UNIP activist in Kabwe, UNIP's once loyal followers were forgotten, betrayed, 'refused the right to participate in institutions created by themselves and are being called old politicians, illiterates, uneducated, and regarded as tools'. The people who were 'hiding in the bush and under their beds for fear of torture', Chewe said, 'are today the masters of our hard fought independence'.<sup>151</sup>

In the absence of a major crisis, such as that experienced in Malawi, UNIP's response to criticism over the failure to deliver on expectations of post-independence was to deny that the problems were a result of dissatisfaction with the party. 'Agitation by Zambia's enemies', Minister Dingiswayo Banda argued, was

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<sup>150</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/1/11/1, 'Conference Report', Aug., 1967.

<sup>151</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 16/9/17, George Chewe to Secretary UNIP Constitutional Commission, 28 Nov., 1969.

responsible for the 'lack of enthusiasm' currently permeating through Zambian society.<sup>152</sup> Measures taken by the Youth Brigade in seeking to buttress UNIP's influence suggest that party leaders were well aware of deepening divisions in the new Zambian party.

Another prominent instance of the steps taken to enforce party loyalty was seen in UNIP's decision to close shops in the areas in which party meetings were taking place. In March 1968, the head of the African Traders Association wrote to the UNIP Secretary General, voicing his disapproval of the measure,

Our members' shops are closed deliberately by the so called Party Officials ... African traders give unequal support to UNIP during the struggle and we are part and parcel to the bringing about of Independence ... we are UNIP and in no way subordinate to any UNIP ... Do you love anything given to you by force? If this behaviour cannot be stopped immediately, the Party should expect very severe reaction from African businessmen.<sup>153</sup>

For many shop owners, here was an example of UNIP acting against its own supporters, those who had performed a central role in the achievement of the 'nation'. Disagreements of this nature created deep tensions within UNIP dominated Zambia. In 1971, they would lead to the entrenchment of one party rule. In Western society, inter and intra-party disagreement is traditionally accepted as a legitimate basis for party political difference; in Zambia, as has been discussed in relation to Malawi, this was regarded as a threat to the fragile bindings of the young nation state, and as such had to be denied and repressed.

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<sup>152</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/2/2/1, Dingiswayo Banda to all Regional Youth Secretaries, Apr., 1966.

<sup>153</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/7/2/2/5, M.S. Mulwanda, Secretary General ZATA to Secretary General UNIP, 3 Mar., 1968.

## *Conclusion*

Taken together, chapters four and five have shown that 1959 was a pivotal moment for African nationalism in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. After years of frustration and division, African politicians having struggled to translate the complexities of the anti-Federation campaign, the seminal events of the Nyasaland emergency and the banning of ZANC were hugely significant in making relevant to the masses the NAC, ANC and ZANC view that African membership of the Federation was likely to result in the permanent subjection of Africans to the whims of settler authorities. From this juncture both UNIP and the MCP found it much easier to develop a comprehensive and self-conscious nationalist ideology based upon a strong, indigenous, and distinctive ethnocentricity which soon came to be expressed in the fight *for* independence as opposed to the fight *against* Federation.<sup>154</sup>

Thereafter, both parties embarked upon a process of fostering a genuine commitment to the 'nation', that is, the idea of a greater Zambia and Malawi which promised a better future, full enfranchisement, and socio-economic advancement, for the African majority. To reinforce the position of MCP and UNIP as the champions of new nationhood, emphasis came to be placed upon the centrality of the parties to the independence struggle. This left little room for confusion and interpretation, the path to independence and freedom from the imposed Federation could be achieved through party membership alone. The means by which both parties attempted to foster and propagate this rhetoric revolved around an ambitious cultural mobilisation programme which placed 'the party' at the

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<sup>154</sup> Interview with Solomon Mwamba, Lusaka, 20 Sept., 2011.



centre of African daily life. Holding regular meetings in the localities, imbuing local organisers with a notion of 'duty', organising funerals and utilising where possible traditional, tribal, concepts to reinforce the UNIP and MCP message were just some of the measures deployed by local and national activists to create a political climate in which UNIP and the MCP were conceived as the sole legitimate representative of African opinion.

By drawing together widely disparate groups together under the UNIP and MCP banner and by engendering their participation in party activities, party leaders helped cultivate a sense of a genuine 'nationalist' sentiment. Whether this national sentiment was real or imagined, it was real enough to bind people together in an expression of commonly expressed cultural contents. UNIP was inextricably tied to the achievement of Zambia, the MCP to the achievement of Malawi. It engendered loyalty superseding personal gain, loyalty centred upon self-sacrifice. This was especially the case with UNIP.<sup>155</sup>

Such methods yielded great success, the growth in both UNIP and MCP membership reaching unprecedented levels by 1961. But as the parties grew in strength and numbers, so too did the insistence that all who remained outside of the UNIP and MCP dispensation stood in opposition to the Zambian and Malawian nation. Whilst nationalist mobilisation was thus eminently successful in drawing vast numbers to their respective national causes, it simultaneously encouraged the growth of authoritarian tendencies which manifested in regular outbreaks of violence against anti-UNIP and MCP proponents. Increasingly, as has been shown,

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<sup>155</sup> A notion that was widely propagated by UNIP. See, for instance, BL, EAP 121, UNIP 5/8/1/2/4, J.C. Ntambo, Regional Administrative Secretary, Broken Hill, to 'All Regional Secretaries', 6 Oct., 1962, in which Ntambo speaks of the extent to which the commitment of UNIP members to sacrifice themselves for the nation had brought for the people of Zambia their 'cherished abjective [sic.]'.

violence came to supersede more traditional modes of mobilisation; it was not only a means by which the parties could guard against opposition, but it created a 'community of violence', a sense that all who participated in it were in some way part of the struggle for the nation that was taking place at high political levels. As soon as it became clear that the anti-Federation battle had been won, anti-opposition rhetoric became the focus for unity, replacing the Federation as a rallying point at critical moments.

In both nations the national movement comprised a veritable patchwork of ethnic, class and cultural groups. They were fused together by the national idea and the desire to achieve African majority rule. For a time, all Africans were united behind the 'national' vision. But this was not sufficient to defuse such differences. As chapter two suggests, this owed much to the manner in which Africans were mobilised. With such heavy emphasis on building the movement from 'grass roots', and in seeking to build momentum for the Congresses by capitalising upon ostensibly local grievances, justifications for participating in the struggle were widely differing and thus dependent upon local conditions. However much African leaders wished to construct a 'national' movement, therefore, the seeds of difference were already deeply ingrained in the fabric of African society. Consequently, as the Federation began to collapse, rivalries rose to the surface. Expectations for independence were elevated and competing interest groups voiced their unease at the seeming exclusion from the nation which they too had laboured to achieve. When secession was finally achieved, the *modus vivendi* was lost.

Perhaps, then, it could be argued that disunity characterised African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. But in many ways this provides the wrong impression. As Lewis argues, in the early 1960s the British rushed to deal with those national-party para-bureaucracies that gave the impression of cohesion. They represented the 'best bet' for British officials anxious to secure Britain's long-term economic interests in the region after independence. The perception of African nationalism, then, at least from the British perspective, was one of unity; UNIP and the MCP thus ought to be commended for this reason. Nationalism in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia was far more than a violent protest movement held together by repression and violence. It was a liberating force, opening opportunities for greater African participation in government and bringing into politics for the first time previously marginalised groups in the African polity. That the MCP and UNIP were able to mobilise on such a mass scale was hugely significant, that they were able to string together disparate groups and create a genuine loyalty to the 'national' cause, overcoming state repression and constitutional disappointment, even if for a short time, was equally, if not more, impressive.

# 6

## *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: British Anti-colonialism and the International Dimension to the National Struggle, 1959-64*

As chapters four and five indicate, nationalist mobilisation and the eventual achievement of independence in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was by no means a straightforward process. It was highly subject to regional discrepancies, dependent upon a series of events that nationalist leaders could not always control. An important yet often overlooked factor impacting upon the independence struggle after 1959 was the support given to the United National Independence Party [UNIP] and the Malawi Congress Party [MCP] by British anti-colonialists and, later, influential international governments and bodies sympathetic to the African cause. The intention of this chapter is twofold. Drawing upon some of the themes first explored in chapter three, the first half of this chapter will suggest that British anti-colonialists played a pivotal role in sustaining nationalist sentiment following the banning of the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC] and the Zambia African National Congress [ZANC], in March 1959. Their re-emergence to national prominence later in the year, as UNIP and the MCP respectively, owed much to the

campaign for African rights waged by groups such as the Africa Bureau, the Movement for Colonial Freedom [MCF] and the Labour Party, who provided former NAC and ZANC activists with crucial moral, financial and practical assistance which helped sustain momentum behind the anti-Federation campaign at a critical juncture. In so doing, British anti-colonialists ensured that NAC and ZANC detainees remained at the fore of the anti-Federation struggle, legitimising the anti-colonial campaigns championed by the new political parties, forged from the remnants of the defunct Zambia and Nyasaland Congresses.

Perhaps the most important contribution of anti-colonial activities, however, was that it imbued UNIP and MCP leaders with the belief that the independence struggle could not be won through the efforts of Africans alone. It would also depend, in part, upon the capacity of nationalist leaders to cultivate an expanded network of international collaborators upon whom they could rely to apply pressure to the British government to resolve Central Africa's problems in favour of the African majority. Assuming a transnational approach, the second half of the chapter will endeavour to explore connections forged between nationalists and external collaborators after 1959 and how this 'internationalisation' of the independence struggle helped expedite the breakup of federation. For UNIP in particular, connections with sympathetic governments and organisations proved especially valuable in winning for the party domestic supremacy. By raising the party's international profile, becoming *the* preferred interlocutor of the international community, UNIP not only improved the party's financial position, enabling it to fight several important election campaigns, but it also helped to

convince the British that UNIP was, if nothing else, a well-supported, viable popular movement to whom power could be transferred.

*African Nationalism and British Anti-colonialism, 1959-60: Metropolitan Responses to the Nyasaland Emergency and the British Anti-Federation Campaign*

As chapter three has demonstrated, whilst anti-colonial organisations such as the Africa Bureau and the MCF played an important role in facilitating the development of nationalism in Central Africa between 1953 and 1958, both groups generally struggled to raise sufficient popular interest in Central African affairs to impact significantly upon the British government's pro-Federation policy. In the later 1950s, both the NAC and the African National Congress [ANC], from which ZANC and later UNIP evolved, subsequently began to doubt whether anti-colonialists would, in future, be able to act decisively in African interests. The declaration of the state of emergency in Nyasaland, and the implementation of restrictions against nationalist activity in Northern Rhodesia, however, marked something of a turning point for metropolitan anti-colonialism and African nationalism alike, strengthening anti-colonial-nationalist bonds and decisively altering the trajectory of African nationalist politics in the Federation.

Occurring at the same time as the Hola Camp revelations, in which it transpired that 11 Mau Mau detainees had been beaten to death by prison guards, news of unrest in Nyasaland and the subsequent banning of the NAC, and ZANC in Northern Rhodesia, sparked widespread interest in the Federation. Fearing the permanent suppression of legitimate African protest, anti-colonial activists were

‘shattered’ by the events.<sup>1</sup> The immediate response was to emphasise that the future of Africa lay with Africans and for reasons of both simple morality and of achieving mutual confidence and security, the British government ought to seek ways in which it could promote African advancement in Central Africa in as expedient a manner as possible.<sup>2</sup> The anti-colonial campaign assumed a dual approach. As this section will demonstrate, in the metropole, the objective was to seek to hold the government accountable for the ‘drastic and distasteful measures being enacted in the name of the British people’.<sup>3</sup> By such means it was anticipated that sufficient pressure could be brought to bear on the Colonial Office to change the direction of its policy towards the Federation. In Central Africa, meanwhile, the utmost assistance was given to African detainees and to those adversely affected by the repressive legislation enacted by the Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland governments. By providing economic and moral support to NAC and ZANC detainees, it was hoped that momentum could be maintained behind the nationalist struggle, that Africans would not lose either the impetus or the incentive to agitate for political change once restrictions on political activity were lifted.

The anti-Federation campaign in Britain assumed a multifaceted approach involving several anti-colonial bodies, notably the Africa Bureau, the MCF, the Fabian Colonial Bureau [FCB] and the recently formed Committee of Africa Organisations [COA], a London-based group set up to support exiled politicians from Anglophone Africa. Relying heavily upon contacts in Central Africa, especially Ministers from the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, such as Andrew Doig, to

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<sup>1</sup> RH, FCB 102/3, Lady Sewyn-Clarke to Pascal Sakota, 11 Mar., 1959.

<sup>2</sup> RH, AB 233/6, ‘Draft proposals for some simple concepts which should underlie a public relations campaign concerning the Federation’, undated, but 1959.

<sup>3</sup> RH, FCB 105/5, Africa Bureau Press Statement, Michael Scott, 24 Jun., 1959.

provide them with a constant stream of information, these groups were anxious to relay developments on the spot to the British public. Letters appeared daily in major British newspapers questioning the legitimacy of the 'murder plot' on which the Nyasaland emergency had been justified whilst the British and Nyasaland authorities were heavily criticised for creating 'deep and bitter division of opinion separating the Government from the people in Central Africa'.<sup>4</sup> Deputations were repeatedly made to the Colonial and Commonwealth Offices urging them to recognise the failure of 'partnership'<sup>5</sup>, and across the country meetings were convened at which African political leaders such as Kanyama Chiume were invited to speak, the largest of which took place on 8 April in the Albert Hall.<sup>6</sup> In addition, anti-colonial pamphlets, such as the Fabian Colonial Bureau's '*Venture*', containing articles written by Africans were widely circulated, and several public protests were planned in order to make visible the extent of opposition to the Nyasaland and Rhodesian governments.<sup>7</sup> In March, for instance, the MCF in conjunction with the CAO organised a picket of the Federal High Commission in London to 'protest against the Tory government's surrender to the white settlers of the Federation'.<sup>8</sup> The following month, the MCF's London Area Council arranged a three-day 'black

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<sup>4</sup> *The Times*, 22 Jul., 1959. Church of Central Africa Presbyterian ministers, such as Andrew Doig, sent regular reports to the British press of the situation in Nyasaland throughout 1959, simultaneously maintaining regular contact with anti-colonial activists in Britain, providing them with a flow of information that might be used as a basis on which to petition the British government to end the Emergency.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance, RH, AB 1/8, Copy of letter delivered by African Bureau deputation to Lord Home, 28 Apr., 1959.

<sup>6</sup> *The Times*, 9 Apr., 1959. At the time of Operation Sunrise, Chiume was in Britain and thus escaped arrest.

<sup>7</sup> Articles such as Chiume's 'Nyasaland: The Case for Secession', *The New Reasoner*, Summer 1959, number 9, which pleaded the British government to end the emergency and release Dr Banda in order to 'retain the friendship of Nyasaland Africans', were indicative of the literature given wide publicity by anti-colonial bodies.

<sup>8</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 13, AC 20-24, MCF Call for Action, 'Protest Against Repression in Central Africa', 14 Mar., 1959.



sash vigil' to take place on Downing Street to campaign for an end to Federation through secession and independence based on universal adult suffrage.<sup>9</sup>

The extent to which such public displays helped to raise awareness of the situation is difficult to assess accurately, but it is perhaps no coincidence that soon after respective public and Parliamentary campaigns were launched a number of anti-colonial organisations reported an increase in membership numbers and donations. In January 1959, the Africa Bureau's secretary had reported that without substantial funds, the Bureau would cease to operate in 'four or five months'.<sup>10</sup> By June, however, the Executive Committee reported that the financial situation had 'substantially improved' in no small part due to the 'increase in Bureau membership' and fund raising campaigns which had seen donations increase from just under £1,000 to approximately £9,500.<sup>11</sup> The MCF reported a similar rise, with new Area Councils being established in several major towns and cities including Manchester and Norwich.<sup>12</sup> The growth of membership numbers also facilitated the holding of large-scale public events, such as the 'Africa Freedom Day' concert held at St. Pancras Town Hall on 19 April, the 'Africa! Africa!' rally at Trafalgar Square on 19 July and the much publicised 'Central Africa Week', held between 24 and 30 July during which prominent African speakers, including Chiume, visited MCF branches around the country raising awareness of the African struggle.<sup>13</sup>

One of the major effects of anti-colonial activities was the stimulus it provided to the Labour Party, which came to assume a more decisive stance against

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, MCF London Area Council, 'Central Africa: Black Sash Vigil', 1-3 Apr., 1959.

<sup>10</sup> RH, AB 1/8, Minutes of the Executive Committee, 22 Jan., 1959.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Minutes of the Executive Committee, 2 Jun., 1959.

<sup>12</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 29, ADC 6, National Annual Conference Report, 1960.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

the federation.<sup>14</sup> As Murray Steele suggests, as the Federation's original architects, Labour had struggled to reconcile its anti-colonial goals with the anti-Federation cause.<sup>15</sup> Whilst some, such as the Party's Commonwealth Officer, John Hatch, had long argued that Labour should distance itself from the Federal scheme, Party leaders were generally of the opinion that Federation might still 'work' if opportunities for advancement were created.<sup>16</sup> The declaration of the emergencies precipitated a change in emphasis, with local Labour parties throughout the country petitioning Party leaders to take a stronger line against the government and to demand a Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry.<sup>17</sup> Whilst some remained ambivalent to guarantee that a future Labour government would solve Africans' problems, MPs nevertheless felt more able to speak out against the Conservative Government's record in Central Africa.<sup>18</sup> This was revealed explicitly in the Party's Central African Policy Committee [CAPC] statement in July 1959 that Federation had 'failed'.<sup>19</sup> This was a significant statement, one which appeared to mark a departure from the more cautious policy advocated in *Plural Societies* in 1956, which committed Labour to work towards making federation work.

On 3 March, the emergency was debated in the Commons for the first time.

James Callaghan, Labour's Shadow Colonial Secretary, vociferously condemned the

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<sup>14</sup> The MCF leadership believed that its role in galvanising the Labour Party in regards to colonial issues 'could not be underestimated'. See SOAS, MCF Box 29, ADC 6, Minutes of the 1959 Annual Delegates Conference, 22 Mar., 1959.

<sup>15</sup> Steele, M., 'Labour and the Central African Federation: Paternalism, Partnership and Black Nationalism, 1951-60', in Frank, B., Horner, C., and Stewart, D., *The British Labour Movement and Imperialism*, (Cambridge, 2010), pp.131-147.

<sup>16</sup> LHA, LPA, CSC/57/36-8, Minutes, 1957.

<sup>17</sup> LHA, LP CSC/58/25-62, Resolutions Received from various Labour Parties, Apr., 1959. Those local parties petitioning the Labour Party included, Oxford City, Romford, South Kensington, Barking, Ealing South, Edinburgh City, Hastings, Ormskirk, Westbury, West Bromwich, Woolwich, and York.

<sup>18</sup> LHA, LP CSC/57/35, Secretary's Report, Feb., 1958.

<sup>19</sup> LHA, LP CSC/58/25-62, Central African Policy Committee, Summary of Discussion, Jul., 1959.

Conservative attitude towards legitimate expressions of African protest. 'Collectively', he said, the government 'share responsibility for the unrest which exists in Nyasaland today'. For years they had known of the extent of African opposition to Federation but had done nothing to remedy African fears. People were living in 'cloud-cuckoo-land' if they thought that Africans in Nyasaland would 'sit quietly and wait until they have attained the standards set' before they could have responsibility for their own government. In sum, Callaghan concluded, the Government had 'grossly mishandled the whole situation'.<sup>20</sup> Echoes of Callaghan's speech were heard in innumerable attacks levied against the Conservatives throughout March and April. MPs such as Tony Benn, Barbara Castle, John Hatch and John Stonehouse, who was earlier deported from Northern Rhodesia by Federal immigration authorities at the climax of his fact-finding tour of the region, led the Parliamentary campaign, pressing for an immediate inquiry into the cause of the disturbances on 25 March.<sup>21</sup> Their belief was that the subsequent report would 'vindicate long-held anti-colonial criticisms of the Federation', laying the foundations for future progress.<sup>22</sup>

Given the distinct shift in emphasis in Britain's Federal policy after 1959, it is not possible to argue conclusively that the criticism arising from anti-colonialists had been decisive in pushing the Colonial Office towards a more liberal policy course in the Federation. As Philip Murphy has shown, there was every indication that doubts over the Federation's current political trajectory existed within British

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<sup>20</sup> *HCD*, 3 Mar., 1959, vol. 601 col.279-283.

<sup>21</sup> See for instance *HCD*, 9 Apr., 1959, vol. 603, col.354-57, and especially 28 Jul., 1959, vol.610 col.317-454.

<sup>22</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 39, COU 25, John Stonehouse, 'Central Africa After Monckton – What Next?', 15 Oct., 1959.

government circles long before Labour's opposition rose to the fore.<sup>23</sup> What is clear, however, is that the actions of Labour and prominent anti-colonial groups helped stimulate a wider public consciousness of the African predicament, which, in turn, created accountability by proxy to which the government had to respond. Whilst anti-colonialists were not necessarily responsible for *opening* the door for constitutional change, therefore, its adherents did shine the spotlight on African nationalist development, reinforcing in the minds of British officials at the Colonial and Commonwealth Relations offices that African nationalism was not a force that could be 'moderated' or channelled into more acceptable parameters under the existing terms of the Federal constitution.

### ***Sustaining African Nationalism: British Anti-Colonialist Activities in Central Africa***

In Central Africa, the response of metropolitan anti-colonialists to the events of 1959 was to seek where possible to support Africans most deeply affected by the discriminatory legislation. The first priority was to secure legal representation for Nyasaland Congress members detained without trial.<sup>24</sup> With this in mind, the Africa Bureau established the Central Africa Crisis Fund to cover the expenses incurred for the legal defence of NAC detainees. At the end of March, over £625 was raised and a significant proportion of donations set aside to cover the costs of a barrister to travel to Nyasaland to act as a public defender.<sup>25</sup> It was perhaps a reflection of the

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<sup>23</sup> Murphy, 'Government by Blackmail', p.64.

<sup>24</sup> The Africa Bureau's executive committee increasingly came to regard its role as being predominantly in the 'private sphere'. Personalities connected with the Bureau 'do not lend themselves to mass publicity campaigns'. Its strength lay in its 'readiness to work being the scenes'. RH, AB, 1/8, Draft to Members of Executive Committee, 22 Sept., 1959.

<sup>25</sup> RH, AB 239/6, Jane Symonds, Secretary for the Africa Bureau to Peter Howard, Secretary of Detainees Welfare Committee, 24 Mar., 1959.

international profile of the Bureau's work that its campaign received substantial financial gifts from overseas sympathisers. In April, for instance, the Bureau accepted a £5,000 gift from the Government of Ghana which went some way to pay the fees of Ghanaian barrister George Mill-Odoi, Thomas Kellock, and Dingle Foot QC, a Labour MP and specialist in constitutional and civil liberty cases, to represent Hastings Banda and his fellow detainees.<sup>26</sup> By June, the Executive Committee of the Africa Bureau reported that over £5,900 had been collected for the legal defence fund.<sup>27</sup>

Soon after the announcement of the Devlin Commission, anti-colonial groups intensified efforts to ensure that a 'fair and just' perspective of events was presented.<sup>28</sup> Anxious that all Africans were able to submit evidence to the Devlin Commission, African Bureau and MCF affiliates in the region widely publicised the Commission's visit in Nyasaland, enlisting the assistance of ministers from the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian [CCAP] missions at Blantyre and Lilongwe. Reverend Fergus Macpherson, for instance, spread news of the Commission throughout Blantyre, and with members from the Blantyre mission, assembled large groups of Africans to give evidence before it.<sup>29</sup> As the Nyasaland Intelligence Committee was forced to admit, such activities had done much to give Congress sympathisers hope and to foster political sentiment.

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<sup>26</sup> RH, AB 239/6, J.E. Sagoe, Official Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for Ghana, to Michael Scott, 10 Apr., 1959.

<sup>27</sup> RH, AB 239/5, 'Crisis in Central Africa', Africa Bureau Circular, undated, 1959.

<sup>28</sup> RH, AB 233/7, Michael Scott to Peter Benenson, Council Member for 'Justice', the British Section of the International Commission of Jurists, 28 Jul., 1959.

<sup>29</sup> NA, CO 1015/1866, Monthly Intelligence Report, May, 1959. As John Stuart suggests, the activities of the CCAP at this time reflected its more overtly anti-Federation stance following the statements of the Blantyre and Lilongwe missions in 1958 which condemned the Federation and marked the CCAP's entry into the political domain. Stuart, J., 'Scottish missionaries and the end of empire: the case of Nyasaland'. *Historical Research*, 76:193 (2003), pp.411-30.

Reaction to the Devlin Commission of Inquiry before its arrival was one of distrust ... However, since its arrival representatives of all communities have given evidence, Africans in great numbers, and the Congress members themselves and their sympathisers have recognised its impartiality in the reception of evidence. It has gradually become the focus of considerable public attention and hope, and people set great store by its findings. Congress sympathisers hope that a finding by the Commission against the Government will justify the release of Dr Banda and other leaders at an early date.<sup>30</sup>

Financial assistance was also given by the Africa Bureau to the CCAP's Detainees Welfare Committee, an organisation set-up to aid African detainees. The Committee was chaired by former NAC member Willie Chokani, its treasurer was Rev. Andrew Doig, and it functioned by receiving appeals from detainees and distributing funds for things such as food, the cost of a telegram or the cost of a pair of glasses. Assistance was also provided for detainees' families.<sup>31</sup>

Dr Banda appeared before the four commissioners in Bulawayo on 16 May. Dingle Foot led the examination and attempted to present Banda as a 'reasonable, patient, restrained, highly moral, tolerant person', and to counter the various criticisms of him which had appeared in Governor Armitage's 18 March despatch justifying his actions. Colin Baker suggests that Banda's performance was well-rehearsed and planned, but that the overall impression garnered by Devlin was eminently favourable, with the commission 'impressed' by the doctor's 'charm'.<sup>32</sup> Whether this would have been possible without Foot's legal representation is unclear, but it almost certainly exercised a significant bearing on proceedings.

Providing for the legal defence of detainees was undoubtedly one of the most important, and notable, contributions of British anti-colonialists at this time.

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<sup>30</sup> NA, CO 1015/1750, Extract from Monthly Intelligence Report, Apr., 1959.

<sup>31</sup> RH, AB 239/6, Jane Symonds to Peter Howard, Secretary of the Detainees Welfare Committee, 24 Mar., 1959.

<sup>32</sup> Baker, *State of Emergency*, p.129.

Not only did it raise the profile of Banda and the NAC by providing party members and detainees with a platform on which to air their views, thereby creating the basis for a more critical appraisal of the Nyasaland government, but it also helped sustain momentum behind the nationalist anti-Federation campaign by indicating that African actions before the declaration were not in fact unlawful. The framework in which African, and indeed colonial, citizens most acutely felt the implications of living under colonial rule was through justice. Being subject to ostensibly British forms of justice in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was a way in which Africans could directly experience the implications of living under British rule. Providing representation for Africans was a means by which Nyasaland detainees could thus challenge the state. When viewed through this lens, the provision of legal aid accrues far greater significance than the historiography had hitherto attributed. As Hastings Banda commented in an interview with Fenner Brockway in 1960, the support of the British anti-colonial movement had been a 'tremendous encouragement' at the time of the suppression. 'It gave hope to me and my comrades in prison', he said, and the 'magnificent fight' waged against colonialism made a 'deep impression on our people and has helped to retain their confidence in justice'.<sup>33</sup> As Thomas Fox-Pitt, Director of the Anti-Slavery Society wrote to Orton Chirwa soon after the establishment of the Malawi Congress Party, Africans thus ought to remain steadfast in their commitment to anti-Federation principles, even if cooperation with the Nyasaland government offered politicians a more immediate way forward. 'I know how difficult things are for you and how easy materially they would be if you took the path of cooperation now', wrote Fox-Pitt. 'I need not

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<sup>33</sup> *Tribune*, 22 Apr., 1960.

remind you that there are very honourable and respected English people here who would be willing to help you through a time of difficulty if they were sure that you were standing firm'.<sup>34</sup>

The campaign conducted on behalf of former NAC activists was soon extended to Northern Rhodesia once the details and ramifications of Governor Benson's repressive legislation came to light. Legal assistance was again the initial priority and finances collected for the purpose of the Central Africa campaign helped to provide representation for Kenneth Kaunda. In May, Secretary of the Africa Bureau Jane Symonds wrote to lawyer Colin Cunningham of Cunningham and Sons with a donation of over £50 to be used to aid Kaunda in bringing his case before the courts of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>35</sup> After Kaunda's arrest and subsequent imprisonment for 12 months on charges of holding illegal meetings in Kabompo, Kaunda's supporters in Britain even went so far as to collect £187 to support his wife and to contribute to his children's school fees.<sup>36</sup>

Whilst many British bodies admitted to being 'financially stretched' at this time, the anti-colonial movement continued to receive, and deal with, requests from Africans for financial aid, an important symbol of the continuing concern for the African predicament in federation. Every effort was made to respond to those considered to be most in need.<sup>37</sup> In May 1959, for instance, S.C. Nkoma wrote to Jane Symonds asking for financial assistance for his six colleagues from the Northern Rhodesia African Mine Workers Trade Union [AMWU] who had been

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<sup>34</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/6/1, Box 8, Fox-Pitt to Chirwa, 1 Oct., 1959.

<sup>35</sup> Colin Cunningham was later acquired to represent Kaunda following his arrest on charges of 'conspiring to effect an unlawful purpose' and for this purpose a further £50 was sent to cover fees incurred.

<sup>36</sup> RH, FCB 12/2, Fox-Pitt to Selwyn-Clarke, 20 Aug., 1959.

<sup>37</sup> RH, AB, 246/7, Jane Symonds to S.C. Nkoma, 14 Dec., 1959.



restricted to remote areas following the declaration of a state of emergency on the Copperbelt in 1956 following an intensification of industrial unrest.<sup>38</sup> Their current predicament, he said, was 'beyond miserable'; they were unemployed and their families going 'half naked' owing to the forced sale of their belongings to pay the cost of 10/- for rent. Whilst Symonds replied in August that funds raised for Central Africa had been allocated, she wrote to Nkoma again in December stating that the Executive Committee of the Africa Bureau had agreed to send the sum of £25 to each of the six restrictees and their families.<sup>39</sup>

The lending of assistance to political activists in general, however, was somewhat problematic. This owed much to the confusion that prevailed following ZANC's banning. As Hilda Selwyn-Clarke of the Fabian Colonial Bureau confessed to Pascal Sakota, a founding member of the African National Freedom Party, whilst the state of affairs in Nyasaland had been 'fairly simple to follow', ZANC's status as a relatively unknown party, and the fact that discriminatory legislation appeared only to affect ZANC members rather than the African population as a whole, had resulted in much less attention being devoted to Northern Rhodesian affairs in the British press.<sup>40</sup> As such, it was difficult to know precisely what was going on and 'what Africans were striving for'.<sup>41</sup> The situation was further complicated by the proliferation of several political parties each claiming to inherit ZANC's legacy. Between June and September, leaders of the African National Independence Party, the United National Freedom Party, and later Mainza Chona's break-away African

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<sup>38</sup> Berger, *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule*, p.98.

<sup>39</sup> RH, AB, 246/7, Jane Symonds to S.C. Nkoma, 14 Dec., 1959.

<sup>40</sup> Over the course of the year, only three articles appeared in *The Times* pertaining to Northern Rhodesia's troubles. See *The Times* digital archive online, Jan., to Dec., 1959.

<sup>41</sup> RH, FCB 102/3, Selwyn-Clarke to Pascal Sakota, 17 Jun., 1959.

National Congress faction each separately wrote to anti-colonialists in Britain condemning their rivals to the political sidelines and declaring that *they* were the true representatives of African political opinion.<sup>42</sup> Frank Chitambala's 'Special Appeal to Friends' was indicative of the rhetoric emanating from political leaders at the time:

We are convinced that neither the unbanned ANC, nor the newly formed United Freedom Party under the leadership of Dixon Konkola are representative of African opinion ... All these organisations have no support from the mass. The people will never respect the two mentioned leaders and their organisations because of their political characters indecisions and insincerity in their national duties.<sup>43</sup>

As Father Patrick Walsh, Secretary to the Archbishop of Lusaka and personal friend of Kaunda remarked to Fox-Pitt, there was in 1959 a 'complete stalemate' in Northern Rhodesian African politics.<sup>44</sup>

Until the political situation in Northern Rhodesia showed signs of recovery, anti-colonialists were reticent to display preference for any one political party. The situation was entirely dissimilar in Nyasaland where it was clear from the outset that Banda, the 'elder statesman' of African politics, would occupy centre stage in any new national framework that was to materialise.<sup>45</sup> He was not only a personal friend to anti-colonialists in Britain, having been a member of the Anti-Slavery Society and the Fabian Colonial Bureau<sup>46</sup>, but he was also seen to occupy the

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<sup>42</sup> See for instance, RH, AB 245/17, Paul Kalichini, Interim National President, ANIP, to Fox-Pitt, 5 Aug., 1959, also FCB 102/3, Mainza Chona to Betts, 3 Sept., 1959.

<sup>43</sup> RH, AB 245/17, Frank Chitambala, Secretary General of ANIP, Special Appeal to Friends, 29 Jul., 1959.

<sup>44</sup> RH, AB 245/13, Father Walsh to Fox-Pitt, 26 Sept., 1959. Walsh himself was an ardent supporter of African nationalist aims and publicly supported Kaunda.

<sup>45</sup> RH, DCP Box 12, Transcript of meeting between Devlin Commission and Thomas Fox-Pitt, with Dingle Foot, held in Royal Courts of Justice, London, 23 June, 1959.

<sup>46</sup> Pugh, P., *Educate, Agitate, Organize: 100 Years of Fabian Socialism* (London, 1984), p.234.

'genuine effectuations [sic.]' of the Nyasaland people.<sup>47</sup> It was only when UNIP was formed, with the explicit aim of uniting African political opinion under Kaunda's leadership, that anti-colonialists became proactive in developing links with the new party.<sup>48</sup> This was reflected in Thomas Fox-Pitt's plea to UNIP's Vice President Paul Kalichini to specifically tailor the appeal to British sympathisers in order to maximise potential benefits. The British people were seemingly ready to throw their weight behind UNIP, Fox-Pitt said, and in order harness the full cooperation of the British people Kalichini and his party would have to emphasise their 'determination in the face of hardship'. Grand requests for 'landrovers' and a 'big party press', he added, were unlikely to yield substantial results. What was needed was 'a modest appeal for a couple of speakers and a duplicator' which would do much to 'remind us here of the great Indian nationalist movement that began in poverty'.<sup>49</sup>

That UNIP and Kaunda became the preferred interlocutors of British anti-colonialists over Nkumbula's ANC reflected the increasingly political nature of anti-colonial support. It reflected, above all, the desire to promote nationalists who came close to the anti-colonial ideal of what nationalism should be.<sup>50</sup> Since the ANC-ZANC split in 1958, Nkumbula had become a marginalised figure in British anti-colonial circles. As chapter three indicated, this owed a great deal to Kaunda's attempts to denigrate his former ally to the ANC's British supporters. Nkumbula's behaviour in 1959, especially his perceived acquiescence in the inequitable actions

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<sup>47</sup> SOAS, FP PPMS 6/6/1, Box 8, Banda to Fox-Pitt, 20 Feb., 1959.

<sup>48</sup> BL EAP 121, UNIP 6/7/13, John Hatch to Frank Chitambala, 31 Dec., 1959.

<sup>49</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/7/3, Fox-Pitt to Kalichini, 14 Aug., 1959

<sup>50</sup> The idea was expressed forcefully by Nicholas Owen in his analysis of British anti-colonial activities in India. See Owen, *The British Left and India*.

of the government in early 1959, and his role in cultivating the second major split in the ANC in September did much to substantiate Kaunda's accusations that Nkumbula was a 'government stooge', stalling Africans' progress. This instantly placed him at odds with those external sympathisers championing African advancement through African unity. As Richard Hall, Editor of the *African Mail* observed, Nkumbula was a divisive figure, preoccupied with 'venal pleasures', and unlikely to win for Africans their freedom.<sup>51</sup> Such sentiments came to be shared by prominent African leaders too. Remarking on the first ANC split in October 1958, Hastings Banda told Fox-Pitt,

About the Nkumbula-Kaunda affair, between us, my own sympathies are wholly with Kaunda. I share your views entirely as to who is the real leader or has the capacity for leadership in Northern Rhodesia. While in Ghana, I was asked to help heal the breach between the two men. I refused. Even Harry, himself, appealed to me, to help reconcile [sic.] the two. But I evaded the issue. In my view, the split is to the good. If Kaunda can rally the majority to his side, it will be a very good thing.<sup>52</sup>

Kaunda, in contrast, came much closer to embodying the Gandhian, pacifist, model seen by British anti-colonialists as *the* panacea for peaceful progress towards self-government in the colonial empire. He was a 'uniting figure', Richard Hall remarked, who had a 'powerful hold' over Africans.<sup>53</sup> Other political leaders trying to inherit leadership of the new national agenda, such as Dixon Konkola, UNIP's first president, were simply not suitable for the task ahead. Attacked by former ZANC luminaries in detention, Konkola was certainly not an individual capable of bringing together disaffected nationalists. He was, remarked Simon Kapwepwe, one of ZANC's founding members then in internal exile in Mongu, Barotseland, a 'waverer',

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<sup>51</sup> RH, AB 249/18, Background Notes for Information of the Africa Bureau by Richard Hall, Editor of the *African Mail*, Oct., 1960.

<sup>52</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/6/1, Box 8, Banda to Fox-Pitt, 30 Dec., 1958.

<sup>53</sup> RH, AB 249/18, Background Notes for Information of the Africa Bureau by Richard Hall, Editor of the *African Mail*, Oct., 1960.

out only for himself, and fixed on 'trying to get rid of Ken [Kaunda] who was defenceless behind bars'.<sup>54</sup> Just weeks after UNIP's founding, Konkola was removed from his position. Contemporary assessments of his replacement, Mainza Chona, were not especially complementary either. Writing to the Africa Bureau, anthropologist James Chaplin indicated that Chona was a 'stop-gap' president, a man whose ideas seemed 'poorly thought out and expressed in little more than clichés'.<sup>55</sup> The overall impression gained in Britain from reports and connections 'on the spot', therefore, reinforced the belief that anti-colonialists were backing the right man when Kaunda returned to fore after his release from gaol in January 1960. His 'sensible' qualities, and his willingness to work towards radical changes in the genuine 'radical-democratic-liberal tradition', Fox-Pitt told Chona, distinguished him from the rest of the pack.<sup>56</sup>

***Divergence of Nationalist-Anti-colonial Aims: The Decline of British Anti-colonial Activity in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland***

By campaigning on behalf of detained nationalist leaders, and by rallying against the restrictions imposed upon the expression of political sentiment, anti-colonialists raised the profile of UNIP and the MCP, giving both parties and their respective anti-Federation campaigns a vital boost at a critical moment. But in many respects, 1959 represented the zenith of anti-colonial influence. Anti-colonialists did not cease in their attempts to act on behalf of Africans in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, as Stephen Howe argues, but, after 1959 the attention of the British

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<sup>54</sup> Remarks from Simon Kapwepwe [to Sikalumbi], 20 Aug., 1959, in Vickery, 'Odd Man Out: Dixon Konkola', p.130.

<sup>55</sup> RH, AB 249/3, Chaplin to Symonds, 21 Dec., 1959.

<sup>56</sup> BL EAP 121, UNIP 6/7/4, Fox-Pitt to Chona, 1 Oct., 1959.

public shifted away from anti-colonialism, instead coming to focus on much larger, all-encompassing, campaigns such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.<sup>57</sup> In the new circumstances created by the Macmillan-Macleod policies of 1960 which saw the release of Hastings Banda and the ending of the Nyasaland emergency, momentum was seized from those championing African advancement in the metropole and the assumption came to prevail among the British public, upon whom anti-colonial bodies relied for funding, that the anti-colonial struggle 'had been won'.<sup>58</sup> Thereafter, the Africa Bureau, the MCF and the FCB entered a period of relative decline in which their attempts to influence the course of events in the Federation were generally frustrated. By late 1961, both the MCF and the Africa Bureau admitted to facing 'difficult financial situations' and, subsequently, their scope for action accordingly narrowed. Between January and September 1961, for instance, the MCF's general fund fell by £705; by October, the Executive Committee reported that it was only donations from Ghana's governing Convention People's Party that was keeping the Movement in operation.<sup>59</sup>

At the same time as dealing with domestic difficulties, anti-colonialists were also faced with the re-emergence of ideological differences which had coloured their relationship with African politicians in the late 1950s. As nationalists became more assertive, a corollary of their growing support base and signs that the British were beginning to move towards a pro-African settlement in Central Africa from 1960, anti-colonialists found themselves increasingly at odds with UNIP and the MCP, whose leaders became more vociferous in their condemnation of the

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<sup>57</sup> Howe, *Anti-colonialism in British Politics*, p.245.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, John Eber, 'Note for Executive on Future of MCF', undated, 1960.

<sup>59</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 1, EC 3-11, Executive Report for 1 September to 25 October.

Federation and calls for immediate self-government. As evidenced by the response of the Committee of Africa Organisations to the Monckton Report, many on the anti-colonial left felt that some form of closer association might still prove beneficial to Africans if the British government assumed a more progressive attitude towards African advancement.

It can be argued that Federation ought never to have taken place, but it does not follow that, having taken place and only partially succeeded, it ought now to be completely dissolved. To do so would destroy much that is good and beneficial to its inhabitants. A marriage may take place between people of incompatible temperament and against the advice of their friends; it does not follow that, after some years when a home and family have been established, the marriage should be dissolved because the incompatibilities do not vanish, but remain to chafe the partners. A counsellor may be called in to try to make the marriage work by analysing and where possible removing the main causes of friction, in the hope that a second chance may succeed.<sup>60</sup>

Both UNIP and the MCP were by this stage, however, vehemently opposed to any form of 'federal' association whatsoever. Federation was a 'serious political liability' and only 'full independence' would now be sufficient to satisfy the African majority.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, nationalist leaders gradually began to lose faith in the capacity of anti-colonialists to support Africans in achieving their independence goals. If their alleged 'supporters' would not give their full backing to UNIP and the MCP's objectives, their support was considered dispensable. As Aleke Banda wrote in *Malawi News* in December 1960 following the MCP's refusal to grant an audience to a delegation of Labour MPs visiting the Federation on the basis of the party's stance towards closer association,

The people of Malawi respect the Labour Party, but their respect for this party should not be taken as subservience and preparedness to be dictated

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<sup>60</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/6/9, Box 11, Committee of Africa Organisations, Draft Report on the Monckton Commission, 1960.

<sup>61</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 52, COU 96(a), Northern Rhodesia Africa News Survey, published by UNIP International and Publicity Bureau, vol. 1, No. 7, 28 Oct., 1960.

by its ill-informed members under the employ of Roy Welensky...They should know that we hate Federation and all that it stands for...We therefore see no reason why such prejudiced people should waste any more of our time by granting them interview.<sup>62</sup>

Whilst larger anti-colonial bodies and the Labour Party struggled to recapture the influence they once held both in Britain and in Central Africa, there remained those that shared a personal interest in the fate of the northern territories who continued to support African politicians in their goal. In 1960, Thomas Fox-Pitt, with Simon Zukas and prominent left-wing commentator, John Papworth, who later served as Kaunda's assistant once Zambia had achieved independence, helped to establish the UNIP London Committee, 'an extension of UNIP headquarters in Lusaka'. Funded entirely by its own supporters, the Committee met regularly in London to discuss developments in the Federation and to 'unite Zambians in Britain' by disseminating UNIP material and publishing the *Voice of Zambia*, a pamphlet intended to keep 'our own people' informed of events that would otherwise not interest the British public.<sup>63</sup> Although this marked a distinct narrowing of the anti-colonial remit, the Committee's activities provided a valuable counterweight to the Federal government's abortive, 'corrupt', 'Build-a-Nation' campaign intended to publicise the benefits of federation to the British public.<sup>64</sup> The UNIP London Committee went to great lengths, for instance, to counter suggestions put forward by some British newspapers in June 1961 that Kaunda's leadership was under threat. 'We are happy to debunk such reports', claimed an article in *Voice of Zambia*,

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<sup>62</sup> *Malawi News*, Dec., 1960.

<sup>63</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/7/13, Box 17, Fox-Pitt Draft Letter to Press, undated, 1960. Kaunda greatly appreciated the role of the UNIP London Committee. This was explicitly evidenced by his request in 1962 that the Committee help him to formulate an economic policy in Zambia once independence was achieved. See for instance, PPMS, 6/7/12, Box 16, Fox-Pitt to Michael Faber, 22 Feb., 1962.

<sup>64</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/44, UNIP memo, 13 May, 1962.



Such reports are frequently published in the settler-owned press in an attempt to split our ranks ... It has been suggested that Mr. Arthur Wina, UNIP Ambassador in the USA, is working against Mr. Kaunda. Yet UNIP London office has just received a letter from Mr. Wina to UNIP H.Q. in which he denies this; expresses full support for Mr. Kaunda and condemns these mischievous reports as without foundation.<sup>65</sup>

Relations between UNIP, the MCP and British anti-colonialists might have diluted after 1960, but connections were not severed entirely. In launching an ambitious programme to influence the political situation in Central Africa via links with trade unions rather than political parties, MCF leaders envisaged a continuing role for the Movement in colonial affairs.<sup>66</sup> As the MCF's General Secretary John Eber told the Executive Committee in mid-1960, the situation in the colonies had changed beyond recognition since the Movement's formation six years earlier. 'While at first we had to do basic spade-work to mobilise opposition to old-style colonialism', he said, 'the emphasis is much more now on mobilising opposition to the new and indirect methods of colonialism – methods which apply to all under-developed countries in one form or another – and also to push much harder the point of the importance of the struggle against these new methods in the interests of the British public'.<sup>67</sup> The Movement therefore ought to consider a new approach, one that would exploit the MCF's valuable links with British trade unions whose members could, it was hoped, seek to extend the Movement's activities among trade unions within the colonies. This was a reflection, not only of the financial and

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<sup>65</sup> SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/7/10, Box 15, 'Voice of Zambia', Newsletter of the London Committee of UNIP, Jun., 1961. On occasion, the Committee extended its remit, becoming embroiled in a legal battle with Welensky following accusations that the plane that crashed in Ndola in September 1961 killing the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, who had travelled to the Congo to help resolve the crisis, had been deliberately sabotaged by Welensky's government. See SOAS, FPP, PPMS 6/7/11, Box 16, *Voice of Zambia*, Sept., 1961. After the threat of legal action, and having reached a financial settlement with Welensky, the authors of the *Voice of Zambia* issued a full apology and retraction of accusations in December.

<sup>66</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 27, AFF 56, correspondence between Jonathan Chivunga, General President of the United Trades Union Congress, Northern Rhodesia and MCF, Jun., 1962 and Feb., 1963.

<sup>67</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 1, EC 3-11, John Eber, 'The Future of the MCF', undated, but 1960.

practical realities facing the anti-colonial movement at this time, but also the extent to which nationalists were increasingly looking beyond the traditional anti-colonial-nationalist axis for new alliances.

From the perspective of Congress leaders, British anti-colonial support had served a vital purpose at a crucial time in their histories. The available documentary evidence is not so explicit as to allude directly to the importance of anti-colonial support, but when taking a much broader view of the exchange of information between the metropole and African politicians in the Federation, it is evident that nationalists themselves grew in confidence by virtue of the moral, financial and practical assistance given to African detainees and political activists throughout 1959 and 1960. As Tony Benn, the MCF's treasurer in the early 1960s, claimed in a public lecture on 9 June 2010, the significance of the anti-colonial intervention in Central Africa was that it provided a platform upon which African politicians could express their grievances, at the same time placing the issue at the fore of the British government's colonial agenda.<sup>68</sup> Crucially, it persuaded policy makers that African opposition was unlikely to subside, even if attempts were made to isolate 'undesirable' elements. As the Colonial Secretary, Iain Macleod, was forced to admit in December 1959, resentment against the Federation was 'deeply and widely held', and Britain could no longer afford to underestimate the strength of the forces that were speaking out against it.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Lecture given by the Rt. Hon. Tony Benn, 'Serving the Next Generation - The Commonwealth in the 21st Century; Movement for Colonial Freedom', Institute of Commonwealth Studies Seminar held at Senate House, London, 9 Jun., 2010.

<sup>69</sup> NA, DO 35/7564, Macleod to Macmillan, 3 Dec., 1959.

### *The Internationalisation of the Independence Struggle: the MCP, UNIP and the Expansion of International Relations, 1960-64*

Although connections with British anti-colonialists were becoming less important to the MCP and UNIP, African leaders, particularly within UNIP, continued to believe that the preservation and the extension of collaborative networks would be crucial to the success of the anti-Federation campaign. The struggle would not be fought in Central Africa alone; it would depend on the capacity to tie the anti-Federation campaign into the broader anti-colonial milieu. The intention of the second half of this chapter is to fully explore UNIP's attempts to 'internationalise' the anti-colonial struggle and its effects upon nationalist politics between 1960 and 1964.

#### ***The MCP's International Campaign, 1960-63***

The stance of the MCP towards international relations, at least before independence, stood in stark contrast to that of UNIP. As Zoe Groves has demonstrated, Hastings Banda had initially embraced his status as *the* key figure in Central African nationalist politics. Following a brief stay in Salisbury in December 1958, he spoke in self-congratulatory terms about his impact upon the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress.<sup>70</sup> Keen to prove his pan-African credentials to his British friends, Banda wrote to Fox-Pitt on 30 December claiming that his stay in Salisbury proved to be a 'blessing in disguise'.

The Africans there received me with such enthusiasm that even the Nyasas were jealous. I stayed with Southern Rhodesian Congress leaders. George

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<sup>70</sup> Groves, Z., 'Malawians in Colonial Salisbury: A Social History of Labour. Migration in Central Africa, c.1920s-1960s', (Ph.D thesis, Keele University, 2011), p.220. Such was the perception of his supposed 'galvanising' effect on Africans there, and anxious to avoid further contact between territorial congress movements, the Federal and territorial authorities declared Banda a 'danger to peace' and prohibited him from entering Southern and Northern Rhodesia under the Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons Act. *The Nyasaland Times*, 16 Jan., 1959.

Nyandoro, the Secretary of the Southern Rhodesian Congress, himself, told his people that I was not only the leader of the Africans of Nyasaland but also of those of Southern Rhodesia.<sup>71</sup>

Banda was anxious, nonetheless, to exercise a note of caution to his own followers. Nyasaland's role in pan-African and international affairs would be limited, at least until independence had been achieved. Speaking in Blantyre upon his return from Salisbury, Banda stated that although Africa was fully behind Nyasaland, 'we must do our own fighting here ourselves ... We cannot expect others to do the fighting for us. God helps only those who help themselves'.<sup>72</sup> The events of 1959 consolidated Banda's approach. The Nyasaland emergency not only gave Banda and his followers international exposure, something that Congress members were eager to press to their advantage, but it had also created a situation in which African political advancement was increasingly regarded as a necessity.<sup>73</sup> Within this context, it was felt that there was little need to extend the MCP's collaborative networks on anything like the scale envisaged by UNIP leaders. This isolationist stance, of sorts, was reflected in the declining interest that the MCP took in the affairs of Northern and Southern Rhodesia in the period immediately preceding independence. As a case in point, Banda vetoed a suggestion put forward by Kaunda in late 1962 that some 18,000 Nyasas in Northern Rhodesia be registered as Federal citizens, a move that would mean Kaunda might be able to obtain their vote at the forthcoming elections.<sup>74</sup> Banda's attitude was further apparent in his rejection of plans for closer cooperation between Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia

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<sup>71</sup> RH, AB 241/1, Banda to Fox-Pitt, 30 Dec., 1958.

<sup>72</sup> NA, CO 1015/1754, Dr Banda's Speech at Blantyre, 28 Dec., 1958.

<sup>73</sup> MNA CAA Mfilm 2027, F248 CAC/155/3/C(Int)/G(ops), Vol., 1, Memo on Flax Musopole, 23 Apr., 1959

<sup>74</sup> NA, DO 183/34, Nyasaland Monthly Intelligence Report, Jan., 1963.

and East Africa. In 1962, two of the MCP's senior members, Du and Yatuta Chisiza, successfully secured agreement from Kaunda and Julius Nyerere, President of the Tanganyikan African National Union [TANU], that some form of federal association between Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania might be desirable once independence in each territory had been achieved. When Banda was approached with the idea, however, he refused adamantly to have anything to do with it.<sup>75</sup> Not all within the MCP agreed with Banda's view. As Mkachi Msuku's desperate plea for UNIP to 'mediate' on the 'disgracing troubles' of mid-1964 which had seen Banda expel several key MCP members from the Malawian Cabinet demonstrate, some individuals remained keen to preserve links with former pan-African allies.<sup>76</sup>

### ***UNIP's International Campaign, 1960-63***

Africans in Northern Rhodesia looked across the border in envy at the manner in which the emergency had brought tangible signs of constitutional progress for Nyasaland. Such changes had been precipitated it was felt, not only by an increase in nationalist agitation, but also by an intensification of international interest in the region that had forced Britain into taking a proactive approach to Nyasaland's problems. With the Federal Review Conference scheduled for 1960 on the horizon, influential figures within UNIP, especially Arthur Wina, UNIP's recently appointed representative in the United States, realised that the party needed to make concerted efforts to reach out beyond Northern Rhodesia if UNIP was to emulate

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<sup>75</sup> Ross, A.C., 'Reflections on the Malawi Cabinet Crisis', p.28.

<sup>76</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/5/18, Makachi Msuku to Sipalo, 19 Nov., 1964.

the MCP's success in winning constitutional advancement for the African people.<sup>77</sup> This sentiment was accentuated following the Cha Cha Cha riots in the Summer of 1961. Having 'failed to protect' its African citizens from the suppressive tactics deployed by the colonial authorities, wrote UNIP's Robert Makasa to Indira Gandhi, ties with Zambia's former protectors were now 'beyond repair'. UNIP subsequently had to seek support elsewhere in furtherance of its objectives.<sup>78</sup> This would not only increase pressure upon Britain to recognise African claims for independence, but also create a body of willing allies to whom the party could turn for support in the initial phase of 'nation-building' after independence.<sup>79</sup>

The idea of extending the anti-Federation struggle beyond Northern Rhodesia's borders was almost certainly inspired by the All-African Peoples Conference, held in Accra in December 1958. Coming soon after an acrimonious split in the African National Congress in October, which saw the establishment of the Zambia Congress under Kaunda's leadership, the Conference impacted significantly upon the make-up of nationalist politics in Northern Rhodesia. Having initially tried to seek accord with his former ally, ANC President Nkumbula admitted to Ghana's future Trade Minister A.Y.K. Djin that he was 'genuinely hurt' to discover that Kaunda had become the preferred interlocutor of Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah and Hastings Banda.<sup>80</sup> Marginalising Nkumbula by accusing him of being responsible for the split, Kaunda's ZANC emerged from the Conference with the firm backing of the Ghana Government, something that Kaunda felt would 'put us

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<sup>77</sup> See for instance Arthur Wina's 'Memorandum on the Requirements and Tentative Programme of the Northern Rhodesia Representatives Abroad', 15 Dec., 1959 in Mulford, *Zambia*, p.145.

<sup>78</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/7, Robert Makasa, UNIP Tanganyika Representative, to Indira Gandhi, 31 Aug., 1961.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 4/8, Nkumbula to A.Y.K. Djin, 27 Feb., 1959

[ZANC] on the map quite effectively'.<sup>81</sup> Such support not only helped win the new party vital financial assistance, but it also enhanced ZANC's reputation within influential pan-African circles.<sup>82</sup> This helped legitimise Kaunda's decision to split from his rival, going some way to consolidating his own position as the key figure in Northern Rhodesian African national politics.

UNIP's international campaign began initially by sending senior party representatives to set up party branches in key centres abroad with a view to raising UNIP's profile. Mainza Chona, UNIP's former interim president, was sent to London, Arthur Wina continued his activities in Washington, Reuben Kamanga was despatched to Cairo, Arnold Mulemba, to Accra and Makasa to Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>83</sup> The locations were specially chosen according to the influence party leaders felt particular governments could exert upon Northern Rhodesia's affairs. The despatch of representatives to the United States would yield obvious benefits, not least because various events in the US, including President John F. Kennedy's election and the progress of the black Civil Rights Movement, indicated that America was undergoing profound shifts in regards to the issue of race relations. In May 1960, Kaunda even met with the American Civil Rights Movement leader Martin Luther King Jr. at Ebenezer Baptist Church, discussing with him prospects for African freedom. Ghana, Egypt and Tanganyika, meanwhile, were at the time the hub of African freedom movements and their leaders and governments were, in Robert

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<sup>81</sup> BL, EAP 121, ANC 5/21, Kaunda to Padmore, 9 Feb., 1959.

<sup>82</sup> Not long after the Conference, Kaunda was able to appeal to Nkrumah via George Padmore, then serving as an adviser to Ghana on African affairs, for financial assistance amounting to £6,330 that would be used to purchase '3 land rovers, 3 microphones, 1 electronic duplicating machine, 1 big typewriter, 1 portable typewriter' and £2,000 for 'propaganda work'.

<sup>83</sup> Makasa, *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*, p.136.

Makasa's assessment, 'among the top Third World champions'.<sup>84</sup> Unsurprisingly, in regions where it was felt little political advantage could be gained from expanding UNIP activities, UNIP assigned lower priority to increasing UNIP's presence. This was reflected, above all, in the numerous calls from UNIP representatives in South Africa for UNIP leaders to pay greater attention to branch activities there. In March 1962, for instance, B.A. Chikuhunibantu, leader UNIP's Johannesburg branch, wrote to Mainza Chona complaining that his branch was 'badly isolated':

Our people are full prepared to give you a hand but as you are silent that side, you are WEAKNING [sic.] this branch. If you could keep on writing to us – even only 2 times a month, it could help us greatly. People at head office should NOT deny us that chance.<sup>85</sup>

The duties of UNIP representatives were akin to those of an ordinary ambassador, though individuals were reminded not to extend their remit beyond the country in which they were operating. It was crucial, Chona told UNIP's international representatives in November 1961, that UNIP was able to present a 'united front' to those whose support the party was attempting to win.<sup>86</sup> One of their most important tasks, Arthur Wina stated, was to establish a 'solid administrative entity' overseas with a view to uniting all Zambians in the struggle for independence.<sup>87</sup> As UNIP's representative in Mwanza, P.B. Jim's passionate call to arms demonstrates, this would provide the party with an important moral advantage, a sense that all were marching together in one spirit to achieve Zambia's liberation:

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p.136.

<sup>85</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/3, B.A. Chikuhunibantu to Chona, 15 Mar., 1962. Arguably, the fact that UNIP's South Africa branch wanted to actively participate in the struggle in Northern Rhodesia goes some way to revealing just how successful UNIP's attempts to 'unite' Zambians everywhere for the purpose of the independence struggle actually were.

<sup>86</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/3, Chona to all International Representatives, 15 Nov., 1961.

<sup>87</sup> Wina quote taken from Mulford, D., *Zambia*, p.144.



Wherever you are, you have a noble job to contribute to the freedom struggle at home ... You must not forget in the history of our struggle, we have come to a point where weakness is no better than a sin, we are at the point whereby courage and determination must be the masters of the day. Our country now needs men and women of unshakable will that must bring freedom to our motherland ... You are therefore called upon Sons and Daughters of Zambia to support our people at home with tools which would make them accomplish the work without delay.<sup>88</sup>

On a practical level, it was felt that bringing together and 'UNIP-ifying' Zambian migrant workers in east and southern Africa, and Zambian students in the US, India and Britain would help transplant UNIP's campaign elsewhere, creating a distinct 'UNIP', rather than Zambian, presence in key locations around the world. Even in regions where party branches were not established, many supporters of the anti-Federation cause were urged to set up unaffiliated bodies to 'provide a communicative medium for 'interested persons' through which 'information, ideas and matters of common or special interest' could be disseminated'.<sup>89</sup> Confined largely to students from the Rhodesias studying overseas, the establishment of politically minded unions reflected UNIP's wider objectives. The Central African Students Union, established in 1960 by Rhodesian students studying in America, for example, was established specifically with a view to 'act as the energetic spearhead in the emancipation of the under-privileged in the 'mother' continent'.<sup>90</sup>

In addition to organising Northern Rhodesian expatriates, UNIP's representatives spent a vast percentage of time arranging bursaries for African students to study abroad. This was important not least as a means to ensure that there was a strong cohort of loyal and educated Africans upon whom UNIP could

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<sup>88</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/30, P.B. Jim, UNIP Organiser, Mwanza, Tanganyika, 'Message to our People', undated, 1962. By 1962, UNIP had a total of seven branches in Tanganyika.

<sup>89</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/5/5, Federation Committee Report, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Rhodesian African Students Union, India, 4 May, 1962.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, Constitution of the Central African Students Union, undated., 1960.

rely when independence was achieved, but also because it was a means by which UNIP could prove to foreign observers that the party was taking seriously its responsibilities for Africans' futures. In addition, it was also perhaps seen as a way of highlighting the failure of the Northern Rhodesian government to provide similar opportunities. Writing to the Education Minister in Lusaka, Makasa stated that of the 535 students from Northern Rhodesia studying in Britain, only 60 were Africans, most of whom were doing 'tea drinking courses' that were of little use to Africans wishing to educate themselves in the mechanics of modern government.<sup>91</sup> Whilst the British regarded such means as an important means of transmitting *British* influence around the world, it was 'absolutely shameful' in Makasa's view that such inadequate provisions were established for educating the next generation of Zambia's leaders.<sup>92</sup>

The most important role of party leaders overseas, however, lay in petitioning foreign governments and anti-colonial bodies to lend support to UNIP's anti-Federation campaign. As Arthur Wina wrote to the Ethiopian ambassador in New York, it was by such means that UNIP hoped to 'confer with other nations', to consider joint diplomatic action to meet the developing crisis and to 'make every effort to exert pressure on the British government'.<sup>93</sup> It was arguably for this reason that on frequent occasions in the early 1960s, UNIP despatched representatives to prominent international conferences with a view to presenting the case for African majority government. In January 1961, for example, Makasa was nominated to

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<sup>91</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/8, Makasa to Minister for Education, 31 Oct., 1961.

<sup>92</sup> Most files in UNIP 9 series contain innumerable petitions for student scholarships. A specific example can be found in UNIP 9/1/5, Sipalo to Director of Bureau of Asian and African Affairs, Monrovia, in which Munu Sipalo asks Ernest Eastman for assistance in finding places at universities for 15 youths who held Senior Cambridge Certificates.

<sup>93</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/10, Wina to Ambassador of Ethiopia, New York, 6 Jul., 1961.

attend the ALOKA International conference on 'Better Human Relationships' in Karachi, Pakistan. Having successfully forged contacts with fellow participants, Makasa issued a joint statement with Ahmen Jaffer, Chairman of the Pakistan Council for World Government, and Maina Macharia of the Kikuyu Welfare Association condemning the 'imperial mentality' of Roy Welensky and the British government.<sup>94</sup>

Letters similar to Wina's plea circulated with monotonous regularity throughout 1961. Appeals for funds, supplies to fight election campaigns, requests for diplomatic assistance and a gentle reminder that people ought not forget the African plight in Northern Rhodesia were regular features of UNIP's correspondence.<sup>95</sup> An important corollary of the attempt to raise the profile of the party internationally was that UNIP succeeded in framing the independence struggle in an exclusively *UNIP* context. The impression projected to international observers, therefore, was that UNIP rather than the ANC was the sole representative of Africans and, thus, it was to UNIP that crucial financial and moral support ought to be directed.

Whilst Nkumbula's ANC could rely only on the support of the Katangan secessionist leader Moise Tshombe, UNIP received advice and assistance of varying sorts from several quarters.<sup>96</sup> Statistics vary, but in its formative years UNIP relied heavily upon the generosity of external sympathisers to both keep the party

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40. The Conference drew participants from five countries with a view to 'discuss human issues in the light of international and its application to and influence on man' political behaviour in a world divided by colour and ideology'.

<sup>95</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/7/2, Makasa to Ambassador of Italy, 9 Jan., 1962.

<sup>96</sup> NA, DO 183/34, Secret Intelligence Report, 'The Decline of the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress and the Increase in Influence of the United National Independence Party', 22 Aug., 1962.

financially solvent and to mount effective election campaigns. Before 1961, the bulk of UNIP's financial assistance came from Ghana. The extent of support is difficult to gauge, but UNIP sources claimed to have received over £10,000.<sup>97</sup> Aid was also forthcoming from organisations in America and Britain, whilst some foreign governments, most notably Liberia, Ethiopia and Tunisia, provided funds for UNIP officials to study abroad.<sup>98</sup> It was assistance from Julius Nyerere's Tanganyika African National Union [TANU], however, that became especially important. Between 1960 and 1961, TANU provided UNIP with two Land Rovers and over £1,500 in contributions to UNIP's election campaign. In May 1962, TANU also offered the facilities of the Tanganyikan Broadcasting Company [TBC] to Kaunda, whose speeches were broadcast into Northern Rhodesia at 10.00pm every evening. As Special Branch reported, this became an invaluable means by which UNIP was able to propagate its message.<sup>99</sup> Taking their lead from the centre, TANU branches operating in Northern Rhodesia also offered their services to UNIP.<sup>100</sup> In September 1963, Edward Mponda, the Divisional Chairman of TANU's Chingola branch, wrote to UNIP headquarters reminding UNIP leaders that TANU people were 'difinetly [sic.] behind you until the day of independence', and that national headquarters need not delay in asking for assistance, especially in regards to the raising of election funds.<sup>101</sup> Nine days later Aaron Milner, UNIP's Afro-European Deputy

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<sup>97</sup> Mulford, *Zambia*, p.164.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> NA, DO 183/34, UNIP Formations in Tanganyika, Special Branch Report, 22 Jun., 1963. For information pertaining to TBC activities, see DO 183/145,. Dar es Salaam to Commonwealth Relations Office, 'Northern Rhodesia', 12 June 1962. Given that the British had consented to TBC broadcasting on behalf of the Malawi Congress Party in 1961, officials could only register weak protest.

<sup>100</sup> There were, by 1963, eight TANU branches operating in Northern Rhodesia. They functioned in a similar way as UNIP's branches overseas.

<sup>101</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/5/4, Mponda to UNIP Headquarters, 4 Sept., 1963.

National Secretary, replied to Mponda thanking him for his offer and informing him that Zambia would remain 'forever indebted' to President Nyerere for his support, both at home and in Tanganyika, where UNIP branch activities had continued to flourish.<sup>102</sup>

As Paul Bjerk has shown, TANU's support for UNIP was in part conditioned by Nyerere's own strategy to strengthen Tanganyika's position in African affairs by unifying east and southern Africa.<sup>103</sup> The first step to this objective, Nyerere believed, was to ensure the rapid devolution of power to Africans in Central Africa by any means possible. At the TANU annual meeting in April 1962, Nyerere even went so far as to warn that if Britain would not aid African leaders in Northern and Southern Rhodesia to achieve independence peacefully, Tanganyika would support the violent rebellion that would inevitably follow.<sup>104</sup>

Nyerere's stance played a crucial role in enabling UNIP leaders to expand the party's international activities.<sup>105</sup> It was by virtue of Nyerere's initiatives, particularly his championing of Kaunda's appointment as president of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central, and Southern Africa [PAFMECSA], established in Addis Ababa in February 1962, for instance, that UNIP was able to place the situation in Northern Rhodesia at the fore of the pan-African agenda. At the first PAFMECSA conference, the organisation condemned the Federation and

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<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, Milner to Mponda, 13 Sept., 1963.

<sup>103</sup> Bjerk, P., 'Postcolonial Realism: Tanganyika's Foreign Policy Under Nyerere, 1960–1963', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 44, 2 (2011).

<sup>104</sup> NA, DO 183/145, No. 2. Dar es Salaam to Commonwealth Relations Office, "Tanganyika and the Rhodesian Federation," 28 April 1962.

<sup>105</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 6/7/22, UNIP Representative in Accra, Confidential Report, 28 Aug., 1963. When compared to the experience of UNIP's representative in Accra, who complained to UNIP Headquarters in August 1963 that he was unable to release UNIP press statements unless the primacy of Nkrumah, the 'Osagyefo', was emphasised, the Tanganyikan government's cooperative stance was hugely significant in facilitating the development and expansion of UNIP's international campaign.

claimed that the failure of the British government to settle the constitutional crisis in Northern Rhodesia constituted a 'threat to the peace and security of Central Africa'.<sup>106</sup> To focus attention on Welensky, the second PAFMECSA conference held in May in Mbeya called for the dissolution of the Central African Federation, pledging support for UNIP.<sup>107</sup> Whilst pronouncements of this nature did not necessarily precipitate significant constitutional change, they were an important means by which UNIP was able to draw the attention of the wider international community, particularly the UN, to Central Africa's problems.

### ***UNIP, the United Nations and the United States, 1960-63***

The timing of the launch of UNIP's diplomatic offensive was carefully planned to coincide with broader ideological shifts in the international sphere. By raising awareness of the Northern Rhodesian situation in this context, UNIP hoped to engender a 'sympathetic atmosphere' among influential international bodies and governments which could, in turn, be used to place 'additional pressure upon the British government to accelerate African advancement'.<sup>108</sup> That Kaunda felt inclined to do so arguably had much to do with the encouragement he received from Sir Ronald Prain, Chairman of the Rhodesian Selection Trust [RST], one of the two major mining groups operating on the Copperbelt, whose intervention helped imbue Kaunda with the belief that attempts to expand UNIP's network of

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<sup>106</sup> 'Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa, PAFMECSA', *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (Spring, 1962), p. 447. See also *Rhodesia Herald*, 15 Mar., 1962.

<sup>107</sup> NA, DO 183/145, No. 30, "The Resolutions Passed at the Emergency Conference of the Pan-African Movement of East Central and Southern Africa held at Mbeya, 13 to 14 May 1962," attachment to Dar es Salaam to Commonwealth Relations Office, 12 June 1962.

<sup>108</sup> BL, EAP 121, UNIP 9/1/40, Arthur Wina to UNIP Representatives, 14 May, 1962.

collaborators would be met with enthusiasm, especially in America.<sup>109</sup> Although it is unclear precisely when the two first met, Prain approached Governor Evelyn Hone about the possibility of meeting with Kaunda as early as September 1959.<sup>110</sup> Believing that Federation was in the best interests for Central Africa's multiracial population, Prain had for many years supported Roy Welensky's United Federal Party [UFP], contributing sums amounting to as much as £5,000 per year.<sup>111</sup> In May 1959, this financial and political support was terminated. By August, Prain was convinced that Federation's future would not be secured by supporting the increasingly racist policies of Welensky and his party.

That Prain decided to meet with UNIP's president, rather than the ANC's, was premised on the basis that Kaunda was a 'much better prospect' than Nkumbula, echoing London's view that the latter was 'far less stable'.<sup>112</sup> Over the course of the next four years, Prain developed close and friendly links with Kaunda, bringing him together with influential British, and later, American, officials for talks on Northern Rhodesia's future. Given Prain's vested interest in the future of the Copperbelt, and given his own belief that political power in the Federation was likely to shift rapidly from the European to the African in the not too distant future, his motives were not entirely altruistic. Nevertheless, as a relative newcomer on the political scene in 1959 and 1960, Prain's advice proved to be an important factor in laying the groundwork for UNIP's international campaign. Kaunda acknowledged as

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<sup>109</sup> Butler, *Copper Empire*, p.176.

<sup>110</sup> Butler, L.J., 'Business and Decolonisation: Sir Ronald Prain, the Mining Industry and the Central African Federation', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 35, No. 3, (Sept. 2007), p.469.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> Prain, R.L., *Reflections on an Era: Fifty Years of Mining in Changing Africa: The Autobiography of Sir Ronald Prain* (London, 1981), p.143.

much in an address to RST's Directors at a lunch they had given in his honour shortly after Zambia's independence. Paying warm personal tribute to Prain, Kaunda noted that at a time when he had still been a 'minor nationalist politician', ignored by the government, Prain had sought him out and discussed major political and economic questions with him. It was from Prain, added Kaunda, that he and his colleagues had learned the virtue of 'reasonable negotiation' and, crucially, the value of exploiting the political sensibilities of foreign interest groups in order to achieve UNIP's own political goals.<sup>113</sup>

With the crisis in neighbouring Congo continuing to deteriorate, with the horrors of apartheid brought to the fore with the massacre of 69 Africans at Sharpeville in March, and with less than one year since the Hola Camp revelations and the publication of the Devlin Report, 1960 was the year in which settler rule came under intense scrutiny. These various crises coincided with the growth of former colonial Afro-Asian states in the United Nations, who began to take concerted steps to permanently eradicate white rule from Africa.<sup>114</sup> This initially found expression in Resolution 1514 (XV), the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, passed in December 1960 by a unanimous vote of 89-0, which called for 'the end of colonialism in all its manifestations'.<sup>115</sup> Pressure applied by the Afro-Asian bloc to colonial powers was reinforced during 1961, when the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard

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<sup>113</sup> NA, DO 183/216, minute by W.B.L. Monson (UK High Commissioner, Zambia), 17 Dec. 1964.

<sup>114</sup> Hoskyns, C., 'The African States and the United Nations 1958-1964', *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 40, No. 3 (Jul., 1964), p.466.

<sup>115</sup> Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its Fifteenth Session, 'Resolution 1514 (XV), the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples', 14 Dec., 1960, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/15/ares15.html>, accessed 19 Dec., 2011. Unsurprisingly, Britain, France, Belgium and the United States abstained from the vote.



to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People was established under Resolution 1654 (XVI).<sup>116</sup> The committee was more commonly known as the UN Committee of Seventeen, or after December 1962, the UN Committee of Twenty-Four.

By the beginning of 1962, Africa was thoroughly intertwined with the procedure and policy of the UN to the extent that 42 per cent of the sixteenth *Annual Report of the Secretary General* was devoted to African issues.<sup>117</sup> In April, Kaunda was given the opportunity of focussing the UN's attention explicitly upon Northern Rhodesia's problems, addressing the UN Committee of Seventeen in New York. There, he emphasised UNIP's 'peaceful' credentials, suggesting that UNIP had been victims of a programme of ruthless suppression by Welensky's government. This, he said, stood in contravention to the elementary rights guaranteed by the UN Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.<sup>118</sup> In the opinion of UNIP's International and Publicity Bureau, Kaunda's speech had a marked effect on the general climate of opinion in regards to Northern Rhodesia's problems, with representatives from Tanganyika, India, Ethiopia, Tunisia, and the USSR unanimous in their support for UNIP's president. Kaunda had given 'a true picture of the tragic situation of the African population', each delegate recognising 'the just struggle of the people of Zambia for their national liberation'.<sup>119</sup> Perhaps the most notable exteriorisation of Kaunda's attempt to influence the UN was seen in the fact that, four weeks later, the UN

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<sup>116</sup> Cohen, A., "A difficult, tedious and unwanted task", Representing the Central African Federation in the United Nations, 1960-1963', *Itinerario*, vol. XXXIV, issue 2, 2010, p.110.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p.113.

<sup>118</sup> SOAS, MCF Box 52, COU 96(a), Northern Rhodesia Africa News Survey, published by UNIP international and Publicity Bureau, vol. 11, No. 3, Jun., 1962.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

Special Committee on Colonialism approved a motion in favour of calling for immediate independence in Northern Rhodesia by 12 votes to 4.<sup>120</sup> This sentiment was further expressed in December 1963, when the UN General Assembly reaffirmed the 'inalienable right' of the people of Northern Rhodesia 'to self-determination and independence', hoping that the territory would 'achieve its independence in the nearest possible future'.<sup>121</sup>

The intensification of UN interest in African decolonisation, which coincided with John F. Kennedy's appointment to the Presidency in January 1961, precipitated a major reappraisal of American attitudes towards colonialism; the State Department could not remain static in its approach.<sup>122</sup> Keen to identify with liberal causes, and anxious to restrict opportunities for communist encroachment into colonies, Kennedy signalled his intentions almost immediately after taking office by replacing the moderate Assistant-Secretary of State for African Affairs, Gilbert Satterthwaite, with the outspoken liberal governor of Michigan, G. Mennen Williams.<sup>123</sup> Between 1960 and 1963, Kennedy met with 28 African leaders, including Kaunda and Banda, both of whom were given the opportunity of discussing the prospects for African self-government in their respective territories

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<sup>120</sup> Cohen, 'A difficult, tedious and unwanted task', p.116. Voting in favour were Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Mali, Poland, Syria, Tanganyika, Tunisia, the USSR, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia. Opposing were Australia, Italy, Britain, and the US.

<sup>121</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Question of Northern Rhodesia*, Resolution 1952 (XVIII), 11 Dec., 1963, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/186/27/IMG/NR018627.pdf>, accessed 3 April 2012.

<sup>122</sup> Meriwether, J., 'Worth a lot of Negro votes': Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign', *Journal of American History*, 95 (Dec., 2008). Having courted black American voters by emphasising the importance of Africa throughout 1960, Kennedy's election seemed to herald a dramatic shift in American policy towards Africa.

<sup>123</sup> Hubbard, J.P., *The United States and the End of British Colonial Rule in Africa, 1941-1968* (North Carolina, 2010), p.156.

in Washington in April 1961.<sup>124</sup> Sponsored by the American Committee on Africa [ACOA], a small group established in 1953 with the intention of lending support and giving public exposure to African peoples struggling for freedom, equality, and independence, the trip had a profound effect on Kaunda. Addressing an African Freedom Day rally on 19 April, Kaunda referred to Kennedy as taking a 'definite and bold stand' on Africa, adding that if the American people 'back President Kennedy and his policies, you will have friends not only in Africa but all over the world'.<sup>125</sup>

Although the US government continued to support British aims in the Federation, the increasing contact with African nationalists suggested that some US officials began to appreciate that African majority rule in settler-dominated colonies would soon become a reality and, as such, the utmost attention ought to be given to cultivating among nationalist leaders a sympathetic, pro-Western attitude.<sup>126</sup> By December 1962, American officials told their British counterparts that Federation was the 'key' to southern Africa's problems. If changes were not made to the respective territorial constitutions there would be escalating dissatisfaction from Africans which might eventually lead to violent outbreaks.<sup>127</sup>

The change in America's position undoubtedly owed much to the growing anti-colonial climate prevailing in the UN, but whether such changes in attitude towards Central Africa would have occurred had UNIP not embarked upon its

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<sup>124</sup> BL, EAP 121, 5/1/12, Report on Meeting between Kaunda and President Kennedy. During this meeting, Kaunda told President Kennedy that his people would work within parameters conducive to maintaining Western-democratic ideals if Africans were given the right to secede.

<sup>125</sup> BL, EAP 121, 6/7/2, UNIP Information Release, Extracts from US Information Service, 21 Apr., 1961

<sup>126</sup> *FRUS*, 'Statement of US Policy to Africa South of the Sahara Prior to 1960', vol.14, *Africa* (Washington DC, 1992), p.56

<sup>127</sup> *FRUS*, 1961-63, vol.21, 493-5.

ambitious international programme is highly debatable.<sup>128</sup> This was certainly the perception among several British officials. As noted by the British colonial attaché in Washington in August 1961, UNIP's approach had yielded tangible results. Expression of a willingness to work within parameters conducive to maintaining Western-democratic ideals marked Kaunda as a 'political moderate worthy of encouragement', and there was every indication that the State Department wished to be as 'helpful as possible' in the present situation.<sup>129</sup> Informal enquiries about the possibility of minor modifications to the Northern Rhodesian constitution reflected the 'underlying currents'.<sup>130</sup>

With signs of a shift in the American position, UNIP became ever more cautious to adapt the party's approach accordingly. The most notable exteriorisation of this policy was evidenced in the party's differing appeals to the countries with which it corresponded. Speaking to representatives at the Belgrade Conference in September 1961, Rueben Kamanga likened the suppression of the Cha Cha Cha disturbances to a 'planned genocide operation' and that Africans ought not to be blamed if they too responded in kind.<sup>131</sup> These were extreme words. But given that Kamanga was addressing a group of leaders that included Nkrumah, Egypt's second president Gamel Abdel Nasser and India's president Jawaharlal Nehru, all of whom used the conference to establish the Non-Aligned

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<sup>128</sup> The debate over the banning of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, and the arrest of nationalist leaders in Southern Rhodesia, and with the prospect of an African majority government forming north of the border, it was broadly recognised that the US government could not stand idly by least it damage its own reputation as the champion of the free world. The State Department became far more vocal in its concerns over the Federation's future. See General Assembly, Resolution 1755 (XVII), *The Question of Southern Rhodesia*, 12 Oct., 1963, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/186/27.pdf>, accessed 3 Apr., 2012.

<sup>129</sup> NA, CO 1015/2247, Colonial Attaché to Macleod, 25 Aug., 1961.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> RH, WP 514/1, Rueben Kamanga, UNIP Cairo Representatives, Memorandum Presented to the Belgrade Conference, Sept., 1961.

Movement—an attempt to pave a middle course for states in the developing world between the Western and Eastern blocs in the Cold War—it is somewhat easier to appreciate his strong rhetoric. In contrast, UNIP went to great lengths to temper its appeal to its Western audience, emphasising the party's 'non-violent' credentials.<sup>132</sup> In a desperate plea to Washington for assistance in August 1961, for instance, Kaunda not only stopped short of likening the actions of the authorities to a 'planned genocide' operation, but implored US officials to intervene via diplomatic channels. 'The killing of Africans and total uprooting of villages in the Northern Province and Luapula Province by so-called security forces of Northern Rhodesia continues', Kaunda wrote. 'I implore you in the name of God and humanity to intervene by raising this matter at United Nations at the emergency session on Bizerta and also directly with Prime Minister Macmillan'.<sup>133</sup> Strains of a similar approach were earlier witnessed in 1960, when Arthur Wina refused to act upon the advice of UNIP's Cairo office and establish a UNIP branch in Cuba. 'Since Cuba is considered a communist country', he said, 'moving there will brand our movement as part of the International Communist movement', and as such UNIP's relations with the US would be coloured by an 'atmosphere of distrust'.<sup>134</sup>

It was imperative that party leaders projected an image of 'responsibility', and this was reflected in Kaunda's growing sensitivity to the company he kept. He was not afraid of taking deliberate steps to jettison contacts regarded by American

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<sup>132</sup> Statement by Kenneth Kaunda, President, United National Independence Party of Northern Rhodesia, delivered New York, 11 Apr., 1961, <http://www.aluka.org/documents>, accessed 30 Sept., 2010. Indeed, when meeting Ralph Dungan, a special assistant of President Kennedy's, he informed him that the best means by which the US could assist UNIP in Northern Rhodesia was to 'encourage' the British to facilitate a smooth transition to independence.

<sup>133</sup> NA, CO 1015/2247, Washington Colonial Attaché to Macleod and Hone, Copy of Kaunda's telegram to the White House, 24 Aug., 1961.

<sup>134</sup> BL, EAP 121, 9/1/10, Wina to Sipalo, 20 Nov., 1960.

officials as 'potentially troublesome'.<sup>135</sup> As a case in point, in February 1962 Kaunda called off a non-violent civil disobedience campaign organised in conjunction with leaders of the World Peace Brigade, Michael Scott, and two African-American activists, Bayard Rustin and William Sutherland, men whom the State Department suspected of having communist leanings.<sup>136</sup> William Wight, an official in the African Affairs Bureau, contended that action organised by such individuals would likely elicit violence in Northern Rhodesia that would swiftly be followed by communist encroachment.<sup>137</sup>

Whether UNIP leaders were in fact conscious of British sensitivity to US, and indeed UN pressure, is not entirely clear, but it is almost certain that the party's attempts to manipulate international trends to its advantage was a deliberate policy objective intended to expedite Northern Rhodesian independence. UNIP was undoubtedly reaping some success. Given Britain's susceptibility to UN dynamics, in particular the criticism of her colonial record by former colonies, the increasing exposure given to the Northern Rhodesian problem by UNIP presented a 'very worrying' development.<sup>138</sup> Northern Rhodesia was too easily linked to events in neighbouring countries, especially the delicate situation materialising in Southern Rhodesia, for Britain to have remained unresponsive to pressure applied by former colonies and UNIP sympathisers in the UN. Such pressure in itself was hugely disconcerting, but it was the ways in which the consistent focus on Britain's colonial record in the Federation affected American attitudes towards British policy in the

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> DeRoche, A., 'Dreams and Disappointments: Kenneth Kaunda and the United States, 1960–64', *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, 9:4 (2008), pp.369–394.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p.376.

<sup>138</sup> NA, F[oreign] O[ffice] 371/66819, no. 8, Maudling to Home, 5 Jan., 1962.

region that helped legitimise the policies already being followed by Macleod and Macmillan in the Federation which, by 1960, suggested that Britain was willing to countenance the devolution of power to the African majority. It is not the intention of this thesis to discuss in any great detail the extent to which Britain's relationship with the Americans impacted upon British colonial policy. To concur with the views of John Kent and Wm. Roger Louis, however, US approval was still absolutely vital to the conduct of Britain's overseas affairs.<sup>139</sup>

That Kaunda was experiencing some degree of success in raising UNIP's profile in the US, and in cultivating for himself an image of a moderate politician worthy of encouragement, was seen in the ringing endorsement he received from sections of the US media. This was surmised in a story in *Life* magazine in May 1960, which portrayed him as a patriotic practitioner of democracy likely to become the first leader of an independent Zambia.<sup>140</sup> The article, written by *Life* publisher Henry Luce, a strident anti-communist, provided instant credibility for Kaunda among American voters and politicians concerned about Third World revolutionaries, and it was this image, in conjunction with his connections with prominent figures such as Ronald Prain, that won him influential allies who lobbied his cause in the highest political circles. It was by virtue of the position of Harold Hochschild, chairman of the RST's parent company, the American Metal Climax, as chairman of the African American Institute, for instance, that Kaunda was able to attend several 'Africa Freedom Day' events in 1960 and 1961 at which he engaged with individuals eager

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<sup>139</sup> Kent, J., 'The United States and the Decolonization of Black Africa, 1945-63' in Ryan, D., and V. Pungong, V., *The United States and decolonization: power and freedom* (Basingstoke, 2000) pp. 168-185. See also Louis, W.R., 'The Dissolution of the British Empire' in Louis, W.R., and Brown, J., (eds.) *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol V., The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1999), pp.329-356.

<sup>140</sup> *Life*, 'Rising African Leader Takes Look at the US,' 30 May 1960, pp.89-92.

to press for African advancement.<sup>141</sup> Hochschild was personally 'impressed' by Kaunda, and when he visited the US again in April 1961 it was Hochschild who arranged for him to meet with President Kennedy via AMEX's connections in the State Department.<sup>142</sup>

UNIP's actions in specifically tailoring its diplomatic offensive not only reflected a wider consciousness of the international, and Cold War, context in which the party was operating, but also demonstrated a degree of flexibility, a willingness to adapt its appeal in line with changes in international political trends in order to maximise the potential benefits for the party's immediate prospects. Whilst UNIP was clearly a willing recipient of *all* support received for its anti-Federation cause, support from certain anti-colonial bodies and governments was undoubtedly more useful than others.

As has been shown, UNIP's campaign and its approach was paying off. By 1963, anxieties pertaining to UNIP's 'lack of experience' came to be replaced by the fear that extremist settler nationalism would begin to make the situation in the Federation untenable. According to the Federation's Ambassador in Washington, Welensky was considered by the State Department to be 'congenitally incapable of entering into anything approaching a cooperative relationship with persons of colour'.<sup>143</sup> Within this context, UNIP's stature grew steadily. Led by a responsible and moderate leader, UNIP's status as a popular, pro-Western, party became ever more preferable to American sensibilities. Given the Cold War climate in which the

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<sup>141</sup> Butler, 'Business and Decolonisation', pp.459-484. Cohen, A., 'Business and Decolonisation in Central Africa Reconsidered', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36:4 (2008) pp. 641-658.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p.651.

<sup>143</sup> RH, WP 231/11, Ambassador in Washington to Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Salisbury, 8 Mar., 1963.



struggle in Central Africa was taking place, diplomatic 'encouragement' was given to Britain to stimulate constitutional devolution in Northern Rhodesia after 1962. Thereafter, as power was gradually transferred to the MCP and UNIP between 1962 and 1964, the US supported British policy, defending Britain's actions in the UN and remaining generally confident that Britain was doing much to ensure a 'satisfactory outcome'.<sup>144</sup>

### *Conclusion*

This chapter has had a dual purpose. By first outlining the extent to which British anti-colonial support helped facilitate the re-emergence of mass African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and by then assessing the ways in which nationalists in UNIP looked to extend the metropolitan anti-colonial-nationalist network of connections thereafter, it is hoped that a case has been made for situating the study of nationalism within a much wider context than the historiography has hitherto attempted. Exploring the links that existed between nationalists in Central Africa, British anti-colonialists and influential international governments and organisations keen to accelerate African independence, is essential, not only insofar as advancing our understanding of nationalist development, but also in bridging the gap between Imperial and Africanist historiographies.

It is somewhat surprising that comparatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to the international dimension of the development of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland particularly in African histories. Part of the

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<sup>144</sup> DeRoche, p.539-40. "Dreams and Disappointments"

problem lies in the tendency to produce UNIP or MCP-centric histories, which have precluded historians from seeking explanations extraneous to the domestic context. The re-emergence of mass nationalism following the upheavals of 1959, for instance, has often been regarded by Africanist historians such as Joey Power and John McCracken as a consequence of nationalist initiatives.<sup>145</sup> Equally, historians such as Andrew DeRoche and Andrew Cohen, who allude to the international dynamics of decolonisation in the Federation, are only tangentially concerned with nationalist politics. The intention of this chapter has been to show that there is a strong case to be made for studying the development of nationalism in the Federation within a transnational context.

Many of the conclusions contained here are not the final word on the subject; they almost certainly require more in-depth research in the archives of the bodies with which nationalists corresponded in order to fully investigate the impact of connections with external agencies upon the independence struggle. It is hoped, nonetheless, that the arguments posited have emphasised the need for a new field of enquiry into nationalist history in Zambia and Malawi. As has been shown, the influence of British anti-colonialists proved especially valuable to former ZANC and NAC activists in 1959, as their practical, moral and financial assistance played an important role in keeping alive nationalist sentiment at a crucial time. Kaunda admitted to his friend Fox-Pitt in 1960 that without the support it received, his party would have struggled to recapture its previous position in Northern Rhodesian politics.<sup>146</sup> Whilst anti-colonial activities were not in themselves decisive in precipitating constitutional change in Central Africa, they nevertheless created a

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<sup>145</sup> Power J., *Building Kwacha*, McCracken, 'The Ambiguities of Nationalism', pp. 67-87.

<sup>146</sup> SOAS, FP, PPMS 6/7/8, Box 15, Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 19 Feb., 1960.

wider consciousness about African political development, which reinforced among British ministers the need for a more proactive, pro-African, policy in the Federation.

The most important legacy left by the British anti-colonial campaign was that it left African leaders with no doubt that the independence struggle could not be won by the efforts of Africans alone; decisive steps needed to be taken to 'internationalise' the anti-Federation campaign. For the MCP, Britain's decision to engage in discussions over Nyasaland's future diminished the party's urgency to embark upon such an ambitious crusade. The situation for UNIP, however, stood in stark contrast. With African advance gathering pace across the border, and with the party's own ambitions frustrated by the 1961 constitutional proposals, progressive party officials such as Arthur Wina realised that UNIP had to take concerted steps to bolster the party's profile internationally in order that pressure be brought to bear on the British to resolve the Northern Rhodesian situation in UNIP's favour.

As evidenced by the trajectory of Zambia's foreign policy after independence, UNIP's international activities left an indelible imprint upon the minds of party leaders, who developed an ideological commitment to liberate Africans living under the oppression of colonial rule. Zambia had a 'duty' to help Africans engaged in the fight against colonialism elsewhere.<sup>147</sup> After 1964, he took active steps to make Zambia an ally of freedom fighters, lending them resources and providing them with space to conduct their operations.<sup>148</sup> 'This was a difficult task', Kaunda later admitted to Harry Kreisler, creator and host of *Conversations*

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<sup>147</sup> Kaunda interview with Harry Kreisler, Institute of International Studies, University of California at Berkeley, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4RPr4rNCtw>, accessed 12 Mar., 2011.

<sup>148</sup> See Chan, S., *Kaunda and Southern Africa: Image and Reality in Foreign Policy* (London, 1991)

*with History*, an interview programme held in association with the Institute of International Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, not least because of the animosity and sanctions that Zambia would incur from settler regimes in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique, 'but we were committed ... God's children should be free, free from oppression'.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Kaunda interview with Harry Kreisler.

## Conclusion

This thesis has endeavoured to trace the development of African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland between 1950 and 1964. Despite the renaissance of historiographical interest in African politics in these two territories in recent years, evidenced in the work of Giacomo Macola and Joey Power, some key questions remain pertaining to the nature of nationalist mobilisation and the rise of nationalist sentiment in the Central African Federation.<sup>853</sup> What has remained a fairly unexplored feature of the historiography is the way in which the national message was translated to the people and how African leaders in the United National Independence Party [UNIP] and the Malawi Congress Party [MCP] were able to weld together different elements in African society, fostering a genuine national consciousness among the African masses of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. For instance, in her study *Building Kwacha*, Power provides a comprehensive analysis of the growth of nationalist politics in Nyasaland, but does not explicitly allude to methods used by African politicians to translate the 'national' message to the African people, and, crucially, the future ramifications that the MCP mobilisation policies had for Malawi's long-term future.<sup>854</sup> Miles

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<sup>853</sup> Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, Power, *Building Kwacha*.

<sup>854</sup> *Ibid.*

Larmer's *Rethinking African Politics* is somewhat more successful in this respect, though, similarly, little focus is devoted to UNIP's mobilisation campaign.<sup>855</sup> Where this thesis hopes to have made an intervention in the debate is by shedding light on the respective campaigns fought by UNIP and the MCP, and their predecessors, the African National Congress [ANC] and the Nyasaland African Congress [NAC]. It has shown how the initial struggle *against* Federation helped stimulate national consciousness and, gradually, how this evolved into a struggle *for* new nationhood.

Precisely why so many subscribed to this vision is an issue that continues to provoke historical debate. Building upon ideas first advanced by contemporary anthropologists such as Peter Harries-Jones, which later found expression in the work of scholars such as Owen Kalinga, this thesis has shown that conformity to the ANC and NAC, and later UNIP and MCP's respective agendas was highly subject to regional differentiation or individual socio-economic circumstances.<sup>856</sup> In certain regions, support for UNIP or the MCP came down to the fact that there existed highly capable party organisers, active in propagating the nationalist programme. For some individuals, the promise of personal advancement was a determining factor; for others, it depended upon the stance of local elites, companions or family members, whose political sensibilities placed pressure upon individuals to adhere to a specific system of political beliefs.<sup>857</sup> These were all significant, but crucially important was the appeal of new nationhood espoused by UNIP and MCP leaders which proved eminently more successful in stimulating national conscious among

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<sup>855</sup> Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*.

<sup>856</sup> Harries-Jones, *Freedom and Labour*, Kalinga, 'Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi'. See also Mulford, *Zambia* and Rotberg, R., 'The Origins of Nationalist Discontent in East and Central Africa', *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Apr., 1963), pp. 130-141.

<sup>857</sup> Kalusa, 'Traditional Rulers, Nationalists and the Quest for Freedom in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s', p.69.

the people. By drawing close links between freedom and the party, making party membership coterminous with the achievement of independence, African political leaders instilled the anti-colonial crusade with strong religious overtones that emphasised Africans' destiny to inherit the nation as their own. If the nation was 'God-given'<sup>858</sup>, then bringing it into being was nothing less than a sacred duty. This was a message that all could understand; one that could easily be transmitted to others. UNIP's then Secretary General, Munu Sipalo, captured the very essence of what nationalist leaders were attempting to do by closely tying the party with the achievement of new nationhood in a 1960 pamphlet on 'solidarity'.

UNIP is not a faction, not a group, not a wing, it is an institution rooted like a tree in the centre around which men group themselves as best they can. It is a fundamental and self-evident thing like life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness or like a National Flag ... It is in fact the synonym of patriotism (Nationalism) which is another name for UNIP ... On this basis therefore it is inconceivable that any self respecting man should not belong to UNIP ... UNIP is a political church which requires regular attendance and has a creed which epitomises the 'modernising' approach.<sup>859</sup>

By 1960, there was little doubt that many African leaders regarded their actions as forming part of a wider struggle for Zambia and Malawi. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, however, this transition from local to national protest was fraught with difficulties. When division manifested within the Congresses, and later UNIP and the MCP—a corollary of the differing views held by locals over the nature of the national struggle—it became increasingly difficult to reconcile rival factions within each party that claimed to be 'united' and representative of the people.

The thesis has shown that the development of nationalist politics was, undoubtedly, a complex process, dependent upon a series of events and

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<sup>858</sup> Quoted from Macola, *Liberal Nationalism*, p.49.

<sup>859</sup> Quoted from Gertzel, C.J., *The Dynamics of the One-Party State in Zambia*, (Manchester, 1984) p.27.

developments that were not always within nationalist leaders' control. Where this thesis has attempted to make an original contribution to the historiography is by situating the development of nationalism within an international context, exploring nationalist relations with British anti-colonialists, the United States, powerful pan-African forces and the expanding United Nations. By so doing, the thesis has shown that the independence struggle was not fought, and won, exclusively as a result of UNIP and the MCP's domestic campaigns. It is important, also, to consider the subsidiary role played by British anti-colonial and influential international sympathisers in supporting nationalist leaders at critical moments in their parties' histories. Nationalist development was not a process confined solely to the borders of the nations in which it first evolved. It also had a genuine international dimension too.

### ***Explaining Nationalist Development in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland***

The Central African Federation was the catalyst for mass African politicisation. It was a symbol of African subjection to white supremacy, a poignant reminder to Africans of lingering racist attitudes among British imperialists that provided a deep, moral relevance to the campaign to win African socio-economic and political freedom in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>860</sup> Until 1957 the campaign was distinctly anti-Federation. Given the propensity of the British to try to make Federation work, the Congress campaign met with little success. Once the decision was taken to by-pass the objections of the African Affairs Board to the Constitutional Amendment Act, the respective political campaigns of the ANC and

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<sup>860</sup> Lewis, 'Harold Macmillan and the Wind of Change', p.223



NAC began to develop a distinct anti-British rhetoric. Throughout the 1950s, nationalism was firmly rooted in the anti-Federation struggle. By agitating for its removal, promising better opportunities for Africans under an African-dominated government, nationalist politicians helped stimulate a genuine 'national' consciousness among the people, bringing together for the first time disparate ethno-regional groups under an anti-Federation banner. This was not, however, sufficient to sustain unity in the long-term.

To concur with Philip Murphy's assessment, proscription of the NAC and the Zambia African National Congress [ZANC] in March 1959 profoundly altered the trajectory of African politics.<sup>861</sup> Africans everywhere had experienced the repressive policies of the state first-hand; this was a physical manifestation of colonial suppression that would continue, African politicians argued, until Africans achieved independence. What was needed, therefore, was a change in emphasis. The scaling up of political agitation at this juncture owed much to the initiative, foresight and organisational skill of several key individuals, who successfully translated the complex anti-Federation, and later 'national', debate into a usable lexicon of protest to awaken the masses. In so doing, nationalist leaders developed a political rhetoric to which a wide range of disparate interest groups were able to respond. This allowed key nationalist leaders to harness powerful forces bearing down upon them, channelling them into winning support for *their* vision of the nation, a vision that embodied equality of individuals, a demand for the abolition of racial privileges and the pursuit of a policy based on equitable distribution of property and of social and economic burdens.

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<sup>861</sup> Murphy, 'Government by Blackmail', p.70.

### ***Explaining the Authoritarian Turn in African Politics***

But, although UNIP and the MCP did much to bring together the African people, closer scrutiny of the evidence has revealed that both parties were not nationally representative bodies at the time of independence. As Sipalo's statement shows, from the very outset the basis on which the anti-Federation campaign was founded was not conducive to the preservation of unity in the long-term. By fusing together party and nation, ingraining in the minds of their followers the advantages of their own group and the deficiencies of another, UNIP and MCP leaders set in motion a chain of events that resulted in the entrenchment of an exclusivist national programme that precluded the expression of alternative views. When competition arose over power and interests, those that believed they subscribed to a more authentic version of the national idea subsequently believed that to ensure justice for their group they must either bring others to their way of thinking or eradicate them completely from the political scene.<sup>862</sup> This created a situation in the early 1960s in which, as UNIP and the MCP grew in popularity, it became ever more difficult to accommodate rival political interests. As has been shown in chapters four and five, this resulted in the marginalisation of minority groups who became the focus for popular agitation. In the case of Northern Rhodesia, Nkumbula's ANC became 'public enemy number one'; in the case of Nyasaland, the MCP's opponents became the party's former allies, such as the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. These groups would have no place in the new Zambian and Malawian nations.

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<sup>862</sup> Dandeker, C., (ed.) *Nationalism and Violence*, (London, 1998), p.viii.

The ever more frequent deployment of violence by party activists gradually came to occupy a central platform in the MCP and UNIP's mobilisation strategies as the date for independence drew near. Intimidation of political opponents became a visible display of loyalty to the party, a means by which Africans could actively participate in the national struggle. In some instances, the very threat of violence was sufficient to induce non-members to purchase party cards. The growth of inter-party violence and the consolidation of a climate in which fear and suspicion thrived was not, as some historians have suggested<sup>863</sup>, solely the manifestation of a handful of party extremists. Rather, as illustrated in the aforementioned chapters it was a policy that was cultivated and encouraged [in]directly from the top. This was not only because it played an important role in bringing together UNIP and the MCP during times of great internal upheaval, but also because it often translated into tangible constitutional gains. As the Nyasaland emergency had shown, violence *did* pay, convincing many policy makers within Whitehall that opportunities had to be provided for advancement lest both territories descend into 'anarchy'.<sup>864</sup> By 1962, after the Cha Cha Cha unrest in Northern Rhodesia, British officials and ministers in Whitehall were left with little doubt that Federation could not be held together without the consent of Africans. Such an assessment obviously took place within the wider framework of British reassessments pertaining to its position in world affairs, but there is every possibility that the trajectory of nationalist politics served to reinforce the belief in British circles that the situation in the Federation would become unworkable if immediate and far-reaching constitutional concessions were not granted to the African majority.

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<sup>863</sup> Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*, p.237.

<sup>864</sup> NA, CO 1015/2527, Macleod to Armitage, 23 Jan., 1960.

In the short-term then, violence was a useful tactic. In the longer-term, however, the emphasis upon unconditional unity to the MCP and UNIP national vision soon gave rise to rivalries within the nationalist movements themselves. As the Federation began to collapse, and when it became increasingly apparent that power would be handed to UNIP and the MCP respectively, the arena of political competition began to gradually transfer from *outside* the two parties to *within* them. Politicians and activists from competing ethnic, regional and socio-economic groups vied for supremacy within UNIP and the MCP, seeking to impose their interpretation of the 'national' ideal upon others. Internal friction manifested in the growth of intra-party rivalry involving the open suppression of party 'opponents', many of whom had been former MCP-UNIP members or allies, by dominant figures or influential power bases. As John McCracken indicated in his influential article 'Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: the Case of Malawi', authoritarianism was not a new phenomenon. Rather, it was rooted in the tactics adopted by the MCP's predecessor, the NAC, to bring together Africans in Nyasaland against Federation during the 1950s.<sup>865</sup> As David Gordon later demonstrated, McCracken's theory can be equally applied to the nature of nationalism developing in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>866</sup>

Whilst the primary intention of the thesis has been to examine nationalist mobilisation in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, an attempt has also been made to shed light on the ways in which nationalist mobilisation during the independence struggle sowed seeds for division and discontent that later contributed to the

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<sup>865</sup> McCracken, 'Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective', pp. 231-249.

<sup>866</sup> Gordon, 'Rebellion of massacre? The UNIP-Lumpa conflict revisited', pp.45-75.

entrenchment of authoritarianism within Zambian and Malawian polity.<sup>867</sup> This has been done for several reasons. In the first instance it allows the thesis to address the contentious issue that independence didn't in fact lead to African freedom, at least not for all given the growth of repressive tendencies. In the second instance, it also permits scope to assess the extent to which the MCP and UNIP were truly successful in uniting Africans, enabling the historian to question whether both parties were responsible for creating genuine 'national' movements or whether they had simply created a protest movement that quickly fell apart once the Federation had been dismantled. This is not an easy question to answer, not least because it comes back to the matter of how one defines 'nationalism'. Although there is a substantial case to argue for the latter—the issue of protest against the Federation had, after all, featured heavily in the ANC and NAC's popular mobilisation campaigns—there is little doubt that both parties had by the late 1950s been able to engender among a bulk of their supporters a deep, personal connection to 'the nation', even if their supporters did not yet know the form that new nationhood would assume.

Whilst it is essential to incorporate the 'authoritarian turn' and its long-term implications for post-independence Zambia and Malawi into assessments of national politics, historians ought not to view all too critically the behaviour and actions of nationalist leaders in the 1950s and 1960s. Given the circumstances in

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<sup>867</sup> As Macola, Larmer, Power and Kalinga have demonstrated in recent years, the presence of rival groups and political parties in Zambia and Malawi at the time of independence demonstrates that UNIP and the MCP were far from nationally representative bodies. See Macola 'It means as if we are excluded from the Good freedom': Thwarted Expectations of Independence in the Luapula Province of Zambia, 1964–6', pp. 43–56, Larmer, 'A Little Bit Like A Volcano', pp.49–83. Power, 'Remembering Du: An Episode in the Development of Malawian Political Culture', pp. 369–396, and Kalinga, 'Résistance, Politics of Protest, and Mass Nationalism', pp. 443–454.

which nationalist mobilisation strategies were adopted, and when taking into consideration the fact that the highly emotional national movements in each country comprised widely diverse ethnic, regional and socio-economic divides, it was a huge task to forge cohesion. This is not an attempt to justify or excuse the use of political violence, but it is not wholly unreasonable to argue that African politicians had not at the time regarded such differences as an insuperable barrier to national unity. They simply wished to ensure absolute unity at all costs, particularly when it became clear that the British were seeking to transfer power in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to Africans.

The pressures facing African leaders throughout this period were immense. With the increasing likelihood that the Federal government would sooner rather than later achieve its goal of dominion status, and with the colonial authorities conspiring to suppress African political activity, circumstances dictated that African independence should become the foremost priority. If this was to be achieved, UNIP and the MCP needed to convince the British and colonial authorities that all Africans were sincere in their commitment to new nationhood, that all Africans were sufficiently prepared for self-government and that all Africans were unlikely to accept anything other than full independence. The suppression of distinct ethno-regional differences by the propagation of a monolithic version of nationalism was seen by some nationalist politicians as way in which their respective parties could overcome such difficulties.

***British Anti-colonialism, African Nationalism and the International Dimension to the African Independence Struggle***

This thesis has not solely restricted its remit to study of Central Africa. By exploring the relationship between nationalists, British anti-colonialists and the international community sympathetic to the anti-colonial cause, a case has also been made to study the development of nationalism within a much broader context than the historiography for Zambia and Malawi has done hitherto. British anti-colonialist groups played an important role in assisting the NAC and ANC campaign between 1953 and 1958. Initially with a view to promoting African advancement, groups such as the Africa Bureau, the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the Fabian Colonial Bureau became the 'African' voice in Britain. By propagating African objections to instances of discrimination and by acting on behalf of the Congresses in Parliament, raising objections to constitutional changes consolidating the position of the settler government, anti-colonialists helped create a wider consciousness in Britain about the African predicament in Central Africa. Although anti-colonial activities generally failed to decisively alter the course of British government policy in the region, they had a significant, if indirect, bearing upon African politics. Anti-colonialists not only served to legitimise the respective Congress anti-Federation campaigns, encouraging leaders to persist in their demands for equality, but also gave them status as *the* principal representatives of African opinion in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland with whom the British government would have to negotiate in future. In addition, the financial and practical support given to African nationalists helped the parties to function domestically, and the guidance given in regards to tactics and organisation played

an important role in 'moderating' the Congresses anti-Federation rhetoric. This subsequently ensured that when the ANC and NAC directly petitioned the British government, they were making 'reasonable' demands.

It is hoped that the analysis of the British left and Central African politics contained in chapters three and six help to outline the interaction between anticolonial bodies in Britain and nationalism in one region, illuminating the ways in which they influenced the trajectory of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. As Nicholas Owen argues with regards to the British left and India, so also in relation to Central Africa anti-colonial support was conditioned by the desire to cultivate a type of nationalism that conformed closely to the anti-colonial, Gandhian, ideal of a responsible, pacifist, movement.<sup>868</sup> For a time, Congress leaders adhered closely to anti-colonial recommendations, framing their anti-Federation campaign within constitutional boundaries and playing upon the British connection in order to achieve advancement goals. By 1958, both Africans and anti-colonialists generally agreed that African advancement needed to occur sooner rather than later. Crucially, however, there emerged widening ideological differences as to how this could best be achieved. As witnessed by Kaunda's attempts to win the backing of several key British anti-colonial groups for his Zambia Congress soon after its formation in 1958, however, anti-colonial support continued to be valued by nationalist leaders. Although there were no guarantees that assistance from external agencies would necessarily translate into tangible gains for Africans, approval from British anti-colonialists was regarded as being crucial for the success of the anti-Federation struggle. At a time in which the ANC

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<sup>868</sup> See for instance, Owen, *The British Left and India: Metropolitan Anti-Imperialism*.



and NAC were searching desperately for recognition and support among their own people, endorsement from elsewhere served an important, symbolic role, providing the Congresses with the incentive to scale up their campaign against the Federation in the late 1950s. In many respects, therefore, the thesis diverges somewhat from the views of historians such as Owen and Stephen Howe, who suggest that the struggle among anti-colonialists to find accord with nationalist ideals in the later 1950s subsequently resulted in a decline in the anti-colonialists' capacity to influence developments 'on the spot'.<sup>869</sup> As argued in chapter six, the noticeable change in anti-colonial and nationalist relations was most evident following the banning of the NAC and ZANC in 1959, when the lending of moral, financial and practical assistance to former NAC and ZANC activists served a crucial role in maintaining momentum behind the anti-Federation struggle. At a time in which African leaders were prevented from returning to the political scene, British anti-colonialists provided Africans with a lead, of sorts, in persisting with their claims for advancement.

The thesis does not, however, fail to find common ground with Howe and Owen's accounts, for, as has been shown, anti-colonial activities in 1950 and 1960 represented the highpoint of British anti-colonial influence with regards to the Federation. Following the establishment of UNIP and the MCP, and the adoption of their respective campaigns for 'independence now', the gradualist approach advocated by anti-colonialists gave rise to ideological differences that damaged anti-colonial relations with UNIP and MCP leaders. Connections between the groups were still upheld, but from 1960 onwards nationalists no longer regarded

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<sup>869</sup> *Ibid.*, p.265, Howe, *Anti-colonialism in British Politics*, p.276.

anti-colonialists as being able to alter the course of British policy in the Federation decisively on Africans' behalf. To bring about major change, many African politicians believed that greater external pressure needed to be placed upon the British Government. For several national leaders, especially within UNIP, who had, unlike the MCP, failed to achieve tangible constitutional advance for their supporters, attention thus turned to cultivating sympathy for the UNIP cause among influential international governments and international anti-colonial organisations who might, in turn, lend the party financial, diplomatic or moral assistance that could be used to further the national cause. Given the fundamental shifts then taking place in the international political climate in regards to colonialism, the time was ripe for UNIP to expand its foreign policy. Party activists thereafter embarked upon an ambitious campaign to internationalise the anti-Federation struggle.

Despite a burgeoning literature on the international dimension to decolonisation in the Central African Federation, few attempts have previously been made to explore the complex and expanding pattern of African nationalist relations with international agencies and the ways in which they affected the Zambian independence struggle. Although historians such as Andrew Cohen and Andrew DeRoche have placed their respective accounts of the break-up of the Federation within an international context, little attention is devoted to nationalist politics.<sup>870</sup> As such, the impression remains that African nationalists were detached from developments within the international anti-colonial sphere. It is hoped that this thesis has gone some way to rectifying this anomaly. Africans were not only integral in shaping international attitudes to Federation, but nationalists were as

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<sup>870</sup> Cohen, 'A difficult, tedious and unwanted task', pp.105-1128, DeRoche, 'Dreams and Disappointments', pp.369-394.

much part of changing the international context as larger world powers such as the US and USSR. The anti-colonial struggle in Malawi, and especially Zambia, possessed a strong international dynamic. By feeding into the growing anti-colonial climate then taking root in the United Nations and the US, and by winning support of powerful pan-African forces between 1960 and 1964, UNIP activities in particular helped to focus attention of the international community specifically on Northern Rhodesia, convincing international bodies and governments that African nationalism was a genuine force, unlikely to subside and unlikely to accept any form of 'closer association'. This later proved an important dimension in improving the party's domestic fortunes, at the same time helping to stimulate awareness internationally about the inherent contradictions of 'partnership' used by the British to justify Federation's existence. In this way, UNIP was able to win acceptance as the voice of Africans in the region at the expense of Nkumbula's ANC, placing pressure upon Britain to concede to UNIP demands for secession and independence.<sup>871</sup>

Examining nationalist engagement with British and international constituencies places the issue of nationalist development within a transnational context. Not only does it go some way to bridging the gap between imperial and African historiographies by finding common ground between the two schools, but it also helps to illuminate the wider implications that the development of nationalism had upon the international, as well as British, anti-colonial climate. By placing the issue of nationalist development within a much wider context, for instance, the thesis has shown that African nationalism did not evolve within an exclusively

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<sup>871</sup> NA, DO 183/34, Secret Intelligence Report, 'The Increase in Influence of the UNIP', 22 Aug., 1962.

domestic context. It was equally dependent upon the shifting axis of international anti-colonial politics and, as such, held the potential to influence and shape the trajectory of these broader, international, developments. UNIP's diplomatic offensive launched in the early 1960s therefore formed part of a cyclical process: international bodies, such as the United Nations, provided nationalists with a decisive boost by virtue of UN pronouncements against colonialism. As nationalists began to grow in stature and confidence as a result, becoming ever more forceful in demands for African self-government, so they began to play an ever increasing role in international affairs. In turn, this helped to feed the growing number of voices advocating full-independence for those nations living under colonial rule in the UN and the United States. Ultimately, the clamour to resolve the situation in favour of the African majority in the Federation's northern territories was simply too great for the British to ignore. These were not just 'national' movements; they also formed part of a wider, international, fight against colonialism.

Precisely where the incentive to 'internationalise' the anti-Federation struggle originated and how the diplomatic offensive evolved almost certainly requires further research. It is hoped, nevertheless, that this thesis establishes the potential for further exploration of the connections that existed between nationalist and international constituencies, of how these impacted upon the fight for independence, and how this continued to shape the trajectory of Zambia and Malawi's foreign policy after 1964. By accounting for the ways in which nationalists tapped into, and in some cases helped shape international anti-colonialism in order to advance their independence goals, this study offers an interesting perspective into the nature of the nationalist struggle in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland,

contributing to the expanding body of literature which deals with the growth of national consciousness.

It was once remarked that necessity is the mother of invention. In no individual event in British colonial policy is this truer than in the conception of the Central African Federation. Facing a multitude of complications in Central Africa, a solution had to be found that fulfilled Britain's long-term policy goals. Federation was seemingly the only feasible course. Three Latin words adorned the Federal coat-of-arms in 1953, *Magni esse Mereamur*, 'let us deserve greatness'; they stood beneath an image of a shield upon which a rising sun signalled a new dawn in Central Africa. The significance of this gesture as the Federal flag was raised on 4 September 1953 was not that it signalled a new beginning for Central Africa, but that it rather ironically, contrary to British hopes and plans, marked the induction of an era of turmoil and racial conflict, the endpoint of which was the break-up of Federation and the granting of independence to African majority governments in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1964.

## *Appendices*

## *Chronological Table of Principal Events*

### **1939**

*Mar* Bledisloe Commission finds against amalgamation for Northern and Southern Rhodesia

### **1949**

*Feb* European settlers hold conference on federation at Victoria Falls  
*Aug* Settlement of the issue of the British South Africa Company's mineral rights

### **1950**

*Apr* Appointment of first UK high commissioner to Central Africa

### **1951**

*Jan-Mar* Patrick Gordon Walker visits Southern Africa, produces 'Baxter Report' recommending closer association  
*Mar* Conference of officials on federation  
*Sept* Victoria Falls conference on federation  
*Oct* Conservatives win British general election  
*Nov* British government announces support in principle for federation

### **1952**

*Mar* Geoffrey Colby, the governor of Nyasaland requests that his colony be excluded from federal negotiations  
*Apr-May* London conference on federation

### **1953**

*Jan* Final London conference settles federal constitution  
*Apr* Southern Rhodesian referendum approves federation  
*July* Rhodesia and Nyasaland Federation Act received Royal Assent  
*Sept* Federation formally inaugurated under interim government  
*Dec* Federal Party wins first federal election

### **1954**

*Feb* Opening of federal Parliament

	Leader of the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress, Harry Nkumbula, and his deputy Kenneth Kaunda sentenced to four months' imprisonment for disseminating 'seditious material'
<i>Mar</i>	Salisbury is selected as the location of the federal capital
<i>Nov</i>	Rhodesian Selection Trust gives six months' notice of the termination of its agreement with the Northern Rhodesian Mine Workers' Union

## 1955

<i>Mar</i>	Federal government announces work will proceed on Kariba hydro-electric scheme
<i>Sept</i>	Rhodesian Selection Trust and Anglo-American reach a joint agreement with the European mine workers

## 1956

<i>Mar</i>	Lord Malvern (formerly Sir G Huggins) demands full self-government for the Federation
<i>June</i>	Sir Arthur Benson writes to London denouncing the policies of the federal government Major industrial action by African workers on the Copperbelt
<i>Sept</i>	State of emergency declared in Northern Rhodesia
<i>Nov</i>	Sir Roy Welensky succeeds Malvern as federal premier

## 1957

<i>Apr</i>	Joint Declaration on future of the Federation
<i>Sept</i>	United Rhodesia Party and Federal Party combined to form United Federal Party
<i>Nov</i>	Federal Constitutional Amendment Bill receives Royal Assent

## 1958

<i>Feb</i>	Sir Edgar Whitehead succeeds Garfield Todd as Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia
<i>July</i>	Return of Hastings Banda to Nyasaland
<i>Sept</i>	White Paper on Northern Rhodesian Constitution published in London
<i>Oct</i>	Kenneth Kaunda splits from ANC in protest at Nkumbula's leadership. Forms Zambia African National Congress.
<i>Nov</i>	United Federal Party wins federal general election
<i>Dec</i>	All-Africa Peoples Conference held in Accra, Ghana. Members from ANC, NAC and ZANC attend

## 1959

<i>Feb</i>	Emergency declared in Southern Rhodesia
<i>Mar</i>	Emergency declared in Nyasaland ZANC banned by Northern Rhodesian government. Leaders detained
<i>July</i>	Announcement of Monckton Commission and publication of Devlin Report
<i>Sept</i>	Malawi Congress Party formed in Nyasaland



*Oct* United National Independence Party formed in Northern Rhodesia

### **1960**

*Jan* Harold Macmillan visits Federation  
*Apr* Release of Hastings Banda  
*June* Belgian Congo becomes independent  
*Aug* New constitution agreed for Nyasaland  
*Oct* Publication of Monckton Report

### **1961**

*Jan* Kaunda released from gaol  
*Jan-Feb* Talks in London on Southern Rhodesian constitution  
*Feb* White Paper on Northern Rhodesian constitution  
*Apr* Banda and Kaunda meet American President John F. Kennedy in Washington  
*June* Revised white paper on Northern Rhodesian Constitution  
*July* New constitution for Southern Rhodesia approved in referendum  
UNIP hold Mulungushi Conference. Unrest breaks out in key rural centres throughout Northern Rhodesia  
*Aug* Banda's Malawi Congress Party wins Nyasaland general election  
*Sept* British government announces its intention to reopen talks over the Northern Rhodesian constitution

### **1962**

*Jan-Feb* Revised constitutional proposals for Northern Rhodesia  
*Mar* Creation of Central Africa Office under R.A. Butler  
*Oct-Dec* Elections in Northern Rhodesia place Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP in a position to form a government  
*Dec* Rhodesian Front defeats United Federal Party in Southern Rhodesian elections  
Winston Field succeeds Sir Edgar Whitehead as Prime Minister  
Butler announces Nyasaland's right to secede

### **1963**

*Feb* Internal self-government in Nyasaland with Banda as Prime Minister  
*Mar* Butler announces right of all territories to secede  
*Jun-Jul* Winding-up conference at Victoria Falls  
*Dec 31* Federation formally dissolved

### **1964**

*Feb* Internal self-government in northern Rhodesia with Kaunda as Prime Minister  
*Apr* Ian Smith replaces Winston Field as Southern Rhodesian Prime Minister  
*Jul* Nyasaland becomes independent as Malawi  
Northern Rhodesia becomes independent as Zambia

## Election Results

Results of the Nyasaland general election held in August, 1961:

Party	Total votes	Percentage votes	Seats
<i>Lower roll</i>			
MCP	71,659	98.8	20
UFP	607	0.8	-
Independents	-	-	-
Christian Liberation Party	272	0.4	-
	72,538	100	20
<i>Higher roll</i>			
MCP	385	10.3	2
UFP	2,108	56.6	5
Independents	1,232	33.0	1
Christian Liberation Party	-	-	0
	3,725	100	8

There were two voter rolls, a lower roll which elected 20 members, and had 106,095 registered voters, and a higher roll, which elected eight members, with 4,337 registered voters. Voter turnout was 91.5% on the lower roll and 85% on the higher roll.<sup>[1]</sup> The result was a victory for the Malawi Congress Party, which won all 20 lower roll seats (in five of which they were unopposed) and two of the eight higher roll seats.

Results of the Nyasaland general election held in April 1964:

Party	General roll seats	Special roll seats	Total seats
MCP	50	-	50
Nyasaland Constitutional Party	-	3	3
	50	3	53

There were two voter rolls, a general roll for the black population that elected 50 members, and a special roll for white voters that elected three members. 1,871,790 people were registered on the general roll, whilst only 814 were on the special

roll.<sup>[1]</sup> However, there were no opposition candidates to either the Malawi Congress Party in the general roll seats (the Nyasaland Asian Convention had dissolved itself declared its support for the MCP), or the Nyasaland Constitutional Party in the special roll seats, resulting in all 53 candidates winning without votes being cast. MCP leader Hastings Banda remained as Prime Minister, leading it to independence on 6 July that year.

## Results of the Northern Rhodesian general election held in October 1962:

Party	Total valid votes	Percentage valid votes	Seats
<i>Upper roll</i>			
UFP	21,558	70.5	13
UNIP <i>(and independent candidates with UNIP support)</i>	6,034	19.75	1
Liberals	1,541	5.0	-
ANC	1,025	3.4	-
RRP	65	0.2	-
Independent <i>(unsupported)</i>	337	1.15	-
	30,560	100	14
<i>Lower roll</i>			
UNIP	59,648	78.2	12
ANC	16,268	21.3	3
UFP	183	0.2	-
BNP	136	0.2	-
Liberals	83	0.1	-
	76,318	100	15

## Results of the Northern Rhodesian general election held on 20 and 21 January 1964:

Party	Total votes	Percentage votes	Seats
<i>Main roll</i>			
UNIP	570,612	69.1	55
ZANC	1,541	30.5	10
National Progressive Party	-	-	-
Independents	3,662	0.4	-
Invalid/blank votes	4,178	-	-
	830,415	100	65
<i>Reserved roll</i>			
UNIP	6,177	35.2	-
ZANC	165	0.9	-
National Progressive Party	11,157	63.6	10
Independents	35	0.2	-
Invalid/blank votes	224	-	-
	17,758	100	10

There were two voter rolls for the Legislative Council, a main roll that elected 65 seats, and a reserved roll that elected 10. Blacks elected the main roll, whilst whites elected the reserve roll. Other ethnicities were allowed to choose which roll to be part of. The United National Independence Party won the election, taking 55 of the common roll seats. Its leader, Kenneth Kaunda became Prime Minister, leading the country to independence in October that year, at which point he became President. Voter turnout was 94.8% for the main roll and 74.1% for the reserved roll.

## *Biographical Information*

Biographical information is provided here for those individuals who feature prominently in this thesis. There were, of course, many hundreds of people that played a part in the transition from Federation to new nationhood in Zambia and Malawi, but the following individuals have been selected based upon what this author considers to be a central role in the events leading to independence. People in this category include prominent African and British politicians, both in the British and colonial administrations, prominent members of anti-colonial groups such as the MCF and the Africa Bureau, missionaries, teachers in Christian educational institutions, pastors and church workers who ministered in Central Africa and, finally, leading settler figures in the Central African Federal government.

**Armitage, Robert Perceval (1906 - 1990)**, was a British colonial administrator who held senior positions in Kenya and the Gold Coast, and was Governor of Cyprus and then Nyasaland during the period when the former British colonies were gaining independence. In 1950, Armitage took up his first senior post in the Colonial Service as Minister of Finance of the Gold Coast. His second major position was taken up in 1954, when he became Governor of Cyprus. He left the post in April 1955 amid huge controversy, in part a corollary of the ongoing conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Armitage arrived in Nyasaland on 9 April 1956 to take over from Geoffrey Colby as Governor. In early 1959, faced with reports of growing African disorder, Armitage asked for authority to declare a state of emergency on 3 March 1959 and subsequently arrested Hastings Banda, which led to further disturbances. Security forces killed 51 Africans and wounded 71. After the British government had implemented measures which saw the release of Banda and the acceleration of African constitutional advancement, Armitage went on leave in August 1960, retiring in April 1961. Armitage died in Amesbury, Wiltshire, England, on 7 June 1990.

**Benson, Sir Arthur GCMG (21 December 1907–1987)**, Governor of Northern Rhodesia. Benson was born in Johannesburg on 21 December 1907. After joining the colonial service in 1931, Benson was sent to Northern Rhodesia as a cadet later moving on to the Secretariat in Lusaka. After the Second World War he returned to Northern Rhodesia and in 1948 became Chief Secretary of the Central African Council. In 1954 he was appointed Governor of Northern Rhodesia until he retired in 1959.

**Boyd, Alan Tindal Lennox-, first Viscount Boyd of Merton (1904–1983)**, politician, was born on 18 November 1904 at Loddington, Bournemouth. In 1954 he became Secretary of State for the Colonies, where he oversaw early stages of decolonisation, with the granting of independence to Cyprus, Ghana, Iraq, Malaya and Sudan. He was in office during the Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya and oversaw Britain's highly controversial counter-insurgency campaign. Persuaded by Macmillan to fight the 1959 general election in spite of the damaging impact of the Nyasaland Emergency and the Hola Camp revelations, Lennox-Boyd was replaced at the Colonial Office by Iain Macleod in October 1959. In the summer of 1960, he was elevated to the House of Lords as the first Viscount Boyd of Merton. Being opposed to the line taken in Harold Macmillan's Wind of Change speech, he subsequently became an early patron of the Conservative Monday Club. He died on 8 March 1983 following a car accident in London.

**Brockway, (Archibald) Fenner, Baron Brockway (1888–1988)**, politician and campaigner, was born on 1 November 1888 in Calcutta. He was a prominent member of the Independent Labour Party between 1907 and 1945, when he joined the Labour Party. From 1942 to 1947 he was chairman of the British Centre for Colonial Freedom, and in 1945 he helped establish the Congress of Peoples against Imperialism. In February 1950 Brockway returned to the Commons as the member for Eton and Slough. His principal fame came from his championing of anti-colonial movements. His interest in Indian independence had been long-standing, and from 1950 he began to visit Africa regularly. From 1954 he was served as chairman of the Movement for Colonial Freedom, an anti-colonial organisation which he has personally helped to establish and remained a staunch campaigner against racial discrimination. He lost his seat in 1964 and, despite misgivings, accepted a life peerage in the House of Lords. He nevertheless continued as chairman of the MCF and, in 1979, he helped set up the World Disarmament Campaign. Brockway died on 28 April 1988, aged 99.

**Chipembere, Henry Masauko (5 August 1930–24 September 1975)** was a key member of the Nyasaland African Congress and later the Malawi Congress Party. Educated at Fort Hare College in South Africa, he returned to Nyasaland in 1954. In December, he attended a meeting of the NAC in Blantyre at which he met Kanyama Chiume. In March 1956, aged only 25, he was elected by an overwhelming majority to represent the Southern Province in Nyasaland's Legislative Council. There, he waged a popular campaign against the Federation, lambasting the lack of opportunities given for African advancement. In April 1955, at the 11th annual conference of the NAC, Chipembere and Chiume proposed secession from the Federation as official policy. Together with Chiume, he was instrumental in persuading Hastings Banda to return to Nyasaland in 1958, and thereafter played a key role in building the NAC's political prestige. He was arrested in March 1959 and taken to Gwelo gaol in Southern Rhodesia with his NAC leadership cohorts. Released in September 1960, Chipembere became the Malawi Congress Party's Treasurer General. After a series of inflammatory speeches, he was again imprisoned in December 1961. He was eventually released in early 1963. Chipembere was one of Banda's key critics in 1964, later attempting to forcibly oust Banda in a failed coup which began in Fort Johnson on 21 February 1965. Chipembere was thereafter exiled from Malawi, spending the remainder of his life in California.

**Chisiza, Dunduza (August 1930–3 September 1962)**, was born in Florence Bay (now Chiweta or Chitimba) in the Karonga district of Nyasaland on August 8, 1930. He worked as a clerk in the records office of the Tanganyika police in 1949, continuing his education at Aggrey Memorial College in Uganda, where he joined and became secretary of the Nyasaland Students' Association centered at Makerere College. In 1955-6, after a stay in the Belgian Congo in 1952-3 and another period in Uganda, he returned briefly to Nyasaland before going to work as a clerk interpreter and translator in the Indian High Commission in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. In Salisbury, Chisiza joined the Mashonaland branch of the Nyasaland African Congress and was instrumental in forming the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress Youth League. In August 1956, he was declared a prohibited immigrant and deported back to Nyasaland, assisting the Nyasaland African Congress in constitutional discussions with the colonial administration. After playing an instrumental role in orchestrating Hastings Banda's return to Nyasaland, Dunduza was among the high profile NAC members arrested in March 1959. Released from gaol in September 1960, he was elected in August 1961 as representative for Karonga in the Legislative Council. In the run-up to independence, Chisiza and

Banda had severe and sometimes heated disagreements over policy. His premature death in a car accident in September 1962 was lamented by several prominent western politicians and economists, including his mentor Henry Phillips.

**Chiume, Kanyama (22 November 1929–21 November 2007)** was born in Nkhata Bay District, Nyasaland, where he became a leading figure in the nationalist movement in the struggle for Malawi's independence in the 1950s and 1960s. Educated in Dar es Salaam and, later, Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda, Chiume was active in African student politics. Upon being approached by the Nyasaland African Congress to stand in the country's first general election in 1956, Chiume accepted, and decided not to further pursue a burgeoning interest in law. Chiume became a driving force in organizing popular support for Hastings Banda and, upon his return in July 1958, was given a senior post in the NAC at the Nkhata Bay conference of August 1958. Unlike his NAC colleagues, Chiume avoided arrest while he was in London in March 1959, but played a leading role in trying to stimulate British public awareness to the African plight. In July 1960 he joined Banda, Orton Chirwa, Aleke Banda and other prominent Africans at the Nyasaland Constitutional Conference in London at which it was decided that Nyasaland would become independent. Chiume was made Minister of Education in 1962 and went on to become Foreign Minister in the first government formed after Malawi's official independence in July 1964. Chiume was a key leader in the 1964 Malawi Cabinet Crisis. He was subsequently driven out of the MCP and exiled to Tanzania where he stayed until 1994. He died in New York in November 2007.

**Fox-Pitt, Thomas Stanley, (1897–1989)** was born on 27 November 1897. Between 1928 and 1952, Fox-Pitt lived in Northern Rhodesia, serving in the Colonial Administrative Service. From 1923 to 1939 he served on the Copperbelt, first as a District Officer at Ndola and then at Mpika. He was particularly concerned at the conditions of the mineworkers and represented their complaints to the Colonial Government. After serving in Navy during the Second World War, Fox-Pitt returned to the Copperbelt, this time to Kitwe. In the face of great opposition from the Colonial Government he encouraged the emergent trade unions and helped them to forge links with the European miners' trade unions. As a result he was transferred from the Copperbelt to become acting Provincial Commissioner in Barotseland in 1948, and a year later to Fort Jameson in the Eastern Province. In 1951 he was put on the retired list. He remained in Northern Rhodesia, living on a smallholding in Kitwe and working with African organisations in opposition to the growing possibility of a Central African Federation. He returned to England in



December 1952, where he became the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1953, co-operating closely with other anti-federation movements such as the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the nationalist Congress parties in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. From 1960, Fox-Pitt's energies were channelled largely into the London Committee of Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP). Fox-Pitt attended the Zambia Independence celebrations in 1964 at which he received the Order of the Freedom of Zambia. For the next two years he served in the Local Government Department of the Independent Zambian Government and on a commission concerning civil service salaries. In 1966 he retired to England. He died in 1989.

**Hastings Kamuzu Banda (15 February 1898–25 November 1997)** was the leader of Malawi and its predecessor state, Nyasaland, from 1961 to 1994. After receiving much of his education overseas, including the United States and Scotland, Banda returned to Nyasaland in July 1958 to lead the Nyasaland Congress in the struggle for independence. On 3 March, Banda, along with hundreds of other Africans, was arrested in the course of "Operation Sunrise". He was imprisoned in Gwelo in Southern Rhodesia, and the Nyasaland Congress banned. Freed from prison in 1960, Banda asserted his control over the Nyasaland African Congress's successor, the Malawi Congress Party, becoming life president of the party in 1960 and the centre of an extravagant personality cult. After the overwhelming success of the MCP in the elections of 1961, he was appointed Minister of Natural Resources and Local Government, and then Prime Minister in February 1963. Malawi achieved independence a little over a year later in July 1964. In 1966 Banda proclaimed Malawi a republic with himself as president, becoming President for Life of Malawi itself in 1971. For almost thirty years no criticism of the life president or the MCP was tolerated, and thousands of victims were gaoled. In 1993, pressurized by a growing popular movement inside the country as well as from outside, Banda was forced to hold a referendum in which Malawians voted decisively for multi-party democracy. In the following May he and the MCP were defeated in Malawi's first democratic election. He died of pneumonia at the Garden City Clinic, Johannesburg, South Africa, on 25 November 1997 and was given a full state funeral on 3 December at the capital he had founded at Lilongwe.

**Huggins, Godfrey Martin, first Viscount Malvern (1883–1971)**, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, was born on 6 July 1883 in Bexley, Kent. He entered politics in 1924 and became Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia in 1933 when his Reform Party won the general election. (The Reform Party subsequently merged with the

Rhodesian Party to form the United Party). Huggins won successive elections and was knighted in 1941. An ardent supporter of amalgamation with Northern Rhodesia, a belief strengthened by close cooperation between the Rhodesias during the Second World War, Huggins played a central role in the negotiations leading to the creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953, which he hoped would prove a loyal imperial buffer between African nationalism to the north and Afrikaner republicanism and rigid apartheid to the south. He was raised to the peerage in 1955 as first Viscount Malvern of Rhodesia and of Bexley, and stepped down from his position as Prime Minister of the Federation on 1 November 1956. In retirement, Huggins strongly opposed UDI, urging the Southern Rhodesian Premier, Ian Smith, to reconsider the logic of his actions. Huggins in Salisbury on 8 May 1971.

**Kaunda, Kenneth David (born 28 April 1924)**, served as the first President of Zambia, from 1964 to 1991. After completing his education in the early 1940s, Kaunda began teaching at Lubwa in 1943, becoming headmaster there from 1944 to 1947. He then moved to the copper mining area, where he founded a farmers' cooperative, was a mine welfare officer (1948), and became a boarding master at Mufulira Upper School from 1948 to 1949. Together with Harry Nkumbula, Kaunda helped found the Northern Rhodesian African Congress, serving as Secretary-General between 1953 and 1958. Increasingly dissatisfied with Nkumbula's leadership of the ANC, he founded the Zambian Congress in October 1958, later becoming the President of its successor, the United National Independence Party. After a protracted struggle, UNIP won independence for the people of Zambia in October 1964. As the first president of independent Zambia, Kaunda helped avert a civil war in the late 1960s but ended up imposing single-party rule. From the 1970s he led other southern African nations in confronting the white-minority governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. He increased Zambia's dependence on copper exports and on foreign aid. Discontent with his leadership resulted in several attempts to remove him from power in the early 1980s, none of which were successful. In 1990 he was forced to legalize opposition parties, and in 1991 he was voted out of office.

**Lyttelton, Oliver, first Viscount Chandos (1893–1972)**, businessman and politician, was born on 15 March 1893. Chandos entered Parliament as Conservative Member of Parliament for Aldershot in a wartime by-election in 1940 and was sworn of the Privy Council the same year. He entered Winston Churchill's war coalition as President of the Board of Trade in 1940, a post he held until 1941, and then served as Minister of State in the Middle East from 1941 to 1942 and as Minister of

Production from 1942 to 1945. He was again President of the Board of Trade in Churchill's brief 1945 caretaker government. After the Conservatives' 1951 election victory, he became Secretary of State for the Colonies, overseeing discussions which led to the creation of the Central African Federation in 1953. He remained in the position until 1954. The latter year he was elevated to the peerage as **Viscount Chandos**, of Aldershot in the County of Southampton. He died in Marylebone, London, in January 1972.

**Macleod, Iain (1913–1970)**, was born on 11 November 1913 at Clifford House, Skipton, Yorkshire. He entered Parliament in February 1950 as a candidate for Enfield. Macleod became Health Minister in 1952. In December 1955 Macleod entered the cabinet as Minister of Labour. After the 1959 general election, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan appointed Macleod Colonial Secretary. Keen to press ahead with reform in Africa after the 1959 Nyasaland Emergency, he embarked upon a course of action that would open the way for the transfer of power to the African majorities in East and Central Africa. In October 1961 Macmillan moved Macleod from the Colonial Office appointing him leader of the House of Commons in 1962, and later, chairman of the Conservative Party Organization. He left the cabinet in 1963 following Macmillan's resignation and Lord Home's subsequent appointment as Prime Minister. He became editor of *The Spectator* until 1964 and thereafter a member of the Shadow Cabinet responsible for the steel industry. His last major appointment was as Shadow Chancellor under Edward Heath's leadership. Macleod died on 20 July 1970.

**Nkumbula, Harry Mwaanga (1917–1983)**, African nationalist leader in Northern Rhodesia, was born in the village of Maala, in the Namwala district, an Ila-speaking area of the southern province of Northern Rhodesia. He was educated at Methodist mission schools and completed standard VI at the Kafue Training Institute in 1934. He then taught for several years in Namwala district. During the Second World War he became involved in the emerging African nationalist movement, serving as secretary of the Mufulira Welfare Association and co-founding of the Kitwe African Society. In 1948, Nkumbula enrolled at the London School of Economics to study economics. He returned home in 1950 without a degree, but with vast experience that would later help the African nationalist cause.

In 1951 Nkumbula was elected president of the Northern Rhodesian African Congress. Having failed to prevent the inauguration of the Central African Federation in 1953, Nkumbula stepped up the campaign for greater African representation, serving a brief prison sentence in 1955 for distributing subversive

literature. Opposition to what was seen as his autocratic leadership of the ANC eventually resulted in a split and the establishment of the Zambia African National Congress under the leadership of Kaunda in October 1958. Although Nkumbula struggled to recapture the influence he once held among the African people, especially in urban centres, he and his party participated in the 1962 Northern Rhodesian elections. Opting to join a coalition with UNIP, ZANC's successor, Nkumbula became Minister of African Education. The alliance lasted until the pre-independence elections of January 1964 which were won by UNIP. In the late 1960s, Nkumbula continued to offer resistance to Kaunda's moves towards the formation of a one-party state albeit without unseating Zambia's president or, indeed, making significant inroads in denting his reputation. On 27 June 1973 Nkumbula announced in the Choma declaration that he was joining UNIP. The ANC was wound up following the dissolution of parliament in October 1973. He died on 8 October 1983.

**Scott, (Guthrie) Michael (1907–1983)**, was an Anglican clergyman and campaigner for racial equality, particularly in southern Africa. He was ordained as a deacon in 1930. In 1943 Scott travelled to South Africa where he served as an assistant priest in Johannesburg. Appalled by conditions of life for non-white people he worked for the Campaign for Right and Justice. From 1950, having been refused entry to South Africa, Scott lived in London. He became honorary director of the non-party-political Africa Bureau which in 1952 started to focus attention on issues in British Africa. Scott also undertook projects outside the bureau's scope, identifying himself with passive resistance in Nyasaland against the Federation. In 1959 he took part in the peace protests in the Sahara against the French atom bomb and he joined the World Peace Brigade in 1962. In 1979 he initiated the organizations Rights and Justice and World Wide Research to focus attention on human rights. He was honoured by Zambia in 1968 and in 1975 was made an honorary canon of St George's Cathedral, Windhoek, Namibia. He died on 14 September 1983 in London.

**Welensky, Sir Roland KCMG (20 January 1907 – 5 December 1991)**, Prime Minister of the Central African Federation was born in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, on 20 January 1907. In 1921 Welensky found employment with Rhodesia Railways later becoming leader of the powerful European Railway Workers Union. He was elected to the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council in 1938, forming his own party, the Northern Rhodesian Labour Party, with the aim of amalgamating the colony with Southern Rhodesia under a new constitution, in 1941. Having played a leading role in the campaign for amalgamation between the Rhodesias, and later federation,

Welensky became Minister for Transport in the Federation upon its inception in 1953. On 1 November 1956, Welensky became Prime Minister of the Federation, securing significant concessions for the Federal Government in 1958, including greater devolution in external affairs, under the Constitutional Amendment Act. After the advent of African majority rule in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1963, Welensky retired to Salisbury, where he re-entered politics and attempted to stop Rhodesia (formerly Southern Rhodesia) from unilaterally declaring itself independent. With the end of white rule in 1979, and the independence of Rhodesia as Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe in 1980, Welensky moved to England, where he died in 1991.

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